Chronicles

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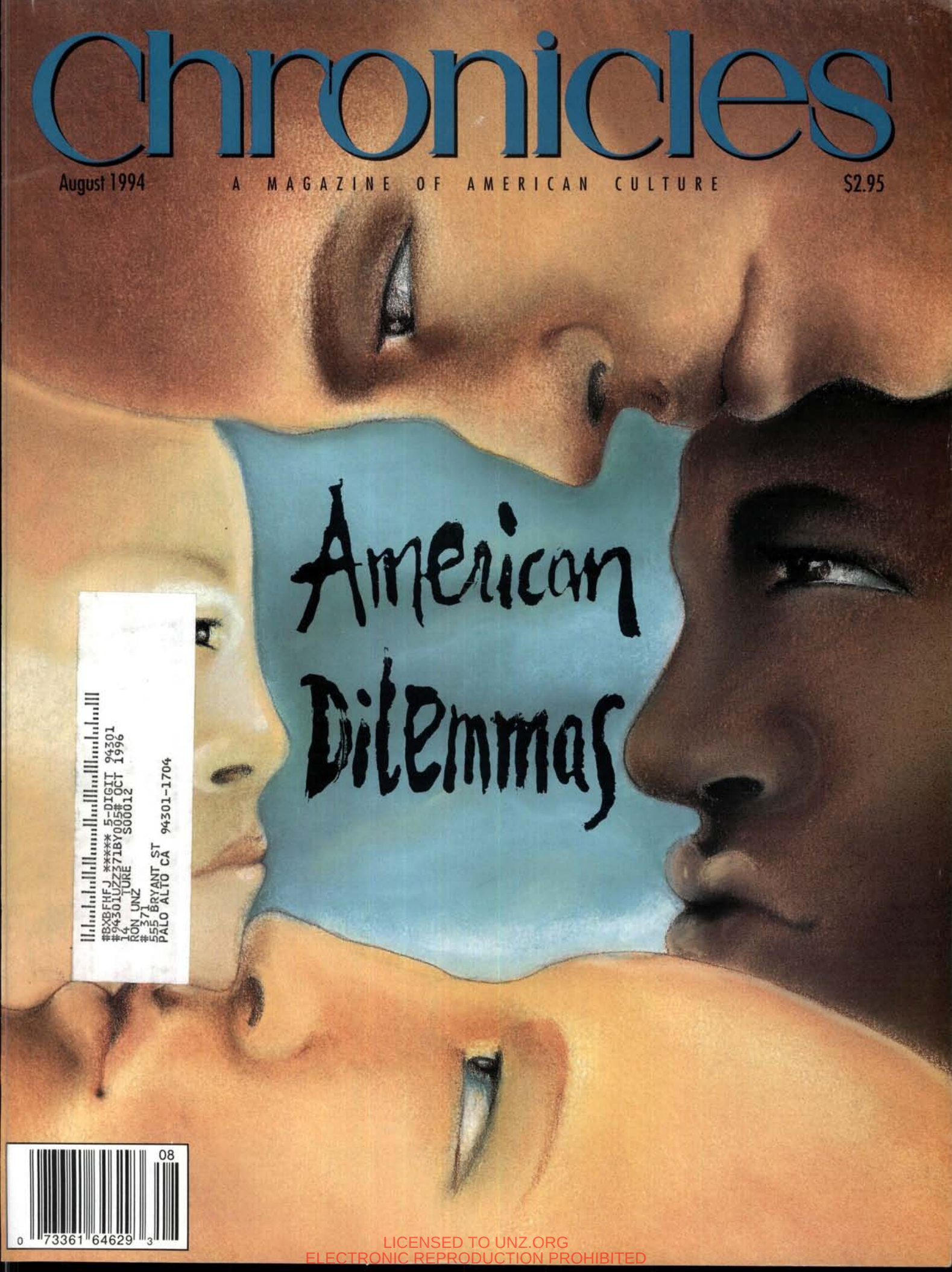

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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On Women in the Military

Having briefly served on the staff of the Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, I read R. Cort Kirkwood's "Life on the Front Lines" (Vital Signs, March 1994) with interest. His report on the commission is exactly correct. Particularly depressing is that so many of the Naval Academy and Military Academy graduates on the commission considered equal opportunity to be more important than military readiness. Even more depressing is that no senior military officers are now willing to voice any opposition to current plans to put women in combat. Apparently none of them are, or desire to be, *real* men—or leaders of real men.

—*Andrew G. Van Sant*
Annapolis, MD

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

THE DEFINITION OF RACISM is expanding every day. For example, some New Jersey residents say a community that erects anticrime walls and gates, common in California and other states, is guilty of racism, no matter who lives there. But don't we have a right to self-protection? In Georgia, a drugstore chain is accused of racism because it puts security tags on certain items to prevent shoplifting. But isn't passive crime prevention acceptable? In Indiana, two white teenage girls are accused of "acting black" because they wear hip-hop clothing—baggy jeans and boots—made popular by black performers in rap music videos. Now let me get this straight: *clothes* are racist? Heck, if that's all it takes, I act black every weekend.

There's more. High school students have invented the term "whigger," which supposedly refers to a white person who wants to be black. That sounds like a stretch to me, but the term's usage is growing. And Jesse Jackson, of all people, says, "There is nothing more painful to me . . . than to walk down the street and hear footsteps and start thinking about robbery. Then [I] look around and see someone white and feel relieved." That was *in our nation's capital*, where he lives. It's true that black-on-black crime is increasing, but is Jesse Jackson racist? I doubt it.

However, he has a point. Crime is crime, whether it's black-on-black, black-on-white, white-on-black, or any other combination. The beatings of Rodney King and Reginald Denny were both despicable and should have been condemned by both black and white leaders. And yet, they weren't. We need leaders who are *truly* race-blind. Otherwise, we'll continue to suffer both anti-white and antiblack violence.

Segregation, planned or voluntary, is increasing—but not where you think. Of the six states with rapid re-segregation, *four* are in the north: Michigan, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Maryland. Of the five states with the fewest whites in mostly black schools, *all* are in the north: Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. A recent study by Harvard University for the National School Boards Association found that "schools in the Northeast are the most *racially separate* of any region," while "the South remained the most *integrated* region." This confirms what Southerners who have lived in the north have long noticed: that segregation in the South did not foster the seething, unspoken, insidious racial hatred that still exists in the north. Compare the study's actual facts to the holier-than-thou pronouncements of certain northerners over the last few decades.

—*Andre Marrou*

RUSSELL KIRK'S DEATH on April 29 deprived both the world of letters and high-toned American conservatism of one of its premier representatives. Author of numerous studies on topics ranging from constitutional law to economics and creator of Gothic mysteries and ghost stories, Kirk left behind a corpus testifying to his rich learning and literary gifts. His best remembered work, *The Conservative Mind*, which has gone

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through seven revised editions since 1953, gave to the then-nascent postwar right a lustrous pedigree. Here Kirk traces the conservative mood and principles, which he saw threatened but still operative in postwar America, back to their provincial English and early American sources. He demonstrates a certain continuity running from John Adams, Edmund Burke, High Federalists, Southern regionalists, and other early 19th-century Anglo-American critics of both equality and the modern state to later spokesmen for the same critical positions. It may be useful to look in this line of succession less for more of the same than for a continuity of spirit, which Kirk convincingly defines as the Anglo-American conservative tradition. It is the author of *The Conservative Mind* who first uncovered that tradition and allowed American conservatives to view themselves as part of a unified and venerable heritage.

Among Kirk's other contributions, for which Thomas Fleming and I are particularly grateful, is the prominence he gave to conservative thinkers and statesmen whom scholars might otherwise overlook. Among these cases in point are Fitzjames Stephens, John Randolph of Roanoke, and William Lecky. Kirk not only theoretically resurrected neglected Anglo-American conservatives, but he brought out the conservative side of figures not often viewed as being on the right. His commentaries on Nathaniel Hawthorne, James Fenimore Cooper, and Herman Melville, all Jacksonian Democrats, have helped to explain these literary figures in a theological light. Because of his own interest in his Calvinist forebears, Kirk looked at the ways in which the idea of Original Sin affected early American culture.

Any biographer of Kirk will face the daunting task of integrating into a single study a body of writing that would take an entire library room to house. These writings include a magisterial biography of Kirk's friend, T.S. Eliot, a learned history of the United States as seen within the Western experience, *The Roots of American Order*, and *The Conservative Constitution*.

Those eulogies that movement conservatives have showered on Kirk in the wake of his death and during a testimonial to him at Dearborn last October are entirely deserved. Without Kirk the postwar conservatism to which I have devoted considerable scholarship would have been far less respectable—and without any serious claim to a past. However, the surprise is not that New York-Washington conservatives have praised Kirk at the end of his life, but that so comparatively little was made of him in his later years. His Heritage Foundation lectures, while they did lend dignity to the shop-and-till conservatism of the Reagan years, seemed to attract attention only when he courageously spoke out about the decadence of his movement.

While older conservatives at Hillsdale College, the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, and Heritage continued to provide Russell Kirk with opportunities, newcomer institutions seemed far more interested in promoting Dinesh D'Souza's collected academic horror stories, *Illiberal Education*. The Festschrift that appeared in Kirk's honor several days before his death waited years for subsidies. It was finally published on a shoestring by a less-than-distinguished conservative press. When the neoconservatives assailed Kirk in 1987 for making surprisingly strong remarks about their involvement with the American-Israeli lobby, few conservatives rose to his defense. Some, like William Buckley, offered to mediate once Kirk had atoned for his indiscretion. Making baseless charges against Kirk as an "anti-Semite" was obviously not considered indiscreet, particularly when the name-callers controlled newspapers and fortunes.

Some paleoconservatives have been heard to grumble that Dr. Kirk might have done more for "the Cause," but there was, in fact, little he or anyone could have done in the declining decade of his life that would have made any difference in the current conservative wars. Not even during his period of fame had he exercised political influence. His own abiding interest was culture, and as he grew older and the left-liberal ascendancy over America became frenetic, his role as a cultural critic grew correspondingly weaker. In 1971, his biography of Eliot, published by Random House, had been widely reviewed by the elite press. Twenty years later his books went unnoticed, except by a few conservative magazines with rather limited readership.

Russell Kirk stood for an older cultural conservatism, which did not "reach out" to those whom Washington conservatives were rushing around to pacify. He did not strike or change his colors; nor did he whine about the lack of "indecisiveness" among conservatives. Despite his "insensitivity" here, he and his wife beggared themselves by caring for Third World refugees, but neither made a political statement out of their acts of Christian kindness.

Kirk's one overshadowing fault revealed the naive goodness of his character. He bestowed selfless love upon a largely unworthy political cause, and though this did not transform that cause, he dramatized the disproportion between his devotion and its object. For many of us there are lessons to be learned from this example, and the most palpable is the need to judge harshly those who refused to defend and even lent themselves to humiliating a noble teacher. For all these ingratitudes, Kirk led a fulfilling life as a husband, father, and as the revered mentor of those youthful devotees who sojourned at his house in Mecosta. Here this benign and erudite man of letters did enjoy a suitable reward even in this transitory existence—and a foretaste of the world to come.

—Paul Gottfried

FLEET FINANCIAL GROUP, New England's largest bank-holding company, made big news when it fired 3,000 people and reduced its operating expenditures by $300 million. In addition, employees no longer get certain small perks, and even its best customers will pay fees that used to be waived for them. Analysts chalked it up to "corporate downsizing," but they didn't point out who had wielded the knife. One month before the layoffs, Fleet was the victim of a racial shakedown.

The villain is self-described "urban terrorist" Bruce Marks, although "midget mugger" might be a better moniker. The very-short Marks grew up in Scarsdale, New York, got his MBA from New York University, and went to work for the New York Federal Reserve Bank evaluating bank-merger applications. It wasn't an honest living, but it beat his later and extremely lucrative "community activism." Thanks to his four-year campaign against Fleet, Marks's Union Neighborhood Assistance Corporation is today $140 million richer.

Marks began shaking his little fist at Fleet when it was planning to buy the failed Bank of New England. He knew from his tenure at the Fed that the

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bank's record in lending to "low-income" borrowers, a regulatory code word for blacks, would come under careful scrutiny. If Fleet did not pass the quota test, the Fed would reject its application.

Marks noted that Fleet wasn't lending directly in Boston's minority-dominated Roxbury, Dorchester, and South End areas. Instead, it backed other mortgage companies that lent at higher rates. Discrimination! he cried. Why should some have to pay higher rates than others? Well, in a loan market, bad credit risks don't get any money, and marginal borrowers pay higher rates to match the higher risk. This kind of economic rationale, however, no longer has any place in America, even though blacks, on average, have lower incomes, fewer assets, less-stable job histories, and worse credit ratings than whites.

Marks first looked for some black residents of Boston who were convinced the white man was ripping them off, not exactly the toughest job in the world. Then he got some left-wing reporters to make the usual fuss, and eventually the story was featured by the *Pravda* of liberal journalism, *60 Minutes*. In response, Fleet agreed to stop purchasing loans from lenders in the inner city with higher interest rates, but that wasn't enough. Marks wanted Fleet itself to make bad loans at low interest rates—and to give his organization a pile of dough.

Boston's Fed tried to arrange a meeting with Fleet officials so Marks could hand them his "Put all your cash in this bag" note. To their credit, Fleet executives refused, and that's when the real trouble began. Over two years, Marks's band of urban guerrillas invaded company meals, meetings, press conferences, and speeches. Once Marks and his union goons barged into a hearing of the Senate Banking Committee and sang spirituals at the top of their voices, perhaps including the old favorite "Swing Low, Sweet Moolah." For this occasion, Marks wore a "Wanted for Loansharking" T-shirt with Fleet Chairman Terrence Murray's picture on it.

It was the sort of display that makes executives cower, politicians swoon, and regulators cheer, and in the end, after more pressure from the Fed and the media, Fleet gave Marks $140 million. It also agreed to set aside $7.2 billion for "low-income" borrowers who wouldn't qualify by normal standards, plus another $800 million for "inner-city borrowers" who make deadbeats look good.

The story ended with a Capitol Hill press conference. Marks hailed the "bold and innovative" new lending program and tossed a hatchet into a papier-mâché coffin to symbolize that, $140 million and all, he was now satisfied. Of course, Marks had actually buried the hatchet in the hearts of Fleet's stockholders and of the credit-worthy customers who would now not get loans. Another set of victims were the 3,000 employees canned one month later.

Fleet's management turned out to be cowardly, but the holdup never would have worked without a Federal Reserve driver at the wheel of the getaway car. Once again, the government, special interests, and the welfare class ganged up on a company and the middle class. That's the welfare state in a nutshell.

—Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr.

EUGÈNE IONESCO'S DEATH on March 28 was hardly noticed by the American press. While European newspapers ran two-page spreads on the renowned playwright—whom they variously referred to as "prince of the absurd," "dynamiter of conformisms," "genial dramatist," "old child," and "melancholy watchman"—the *New York Times* marked the event with only a standard obituary. But alas, outside of introductory French classes, Ionesco has for years now been neglected in the United States.

Ionesco, who won the Ingersoll Foundation's T.S. Eliot Award for Creative Writing in 1985, was born in Slatina, Romania, on November 26, 1909—although he claimed 1912 as his birth year, so as to have made his fame by the age of 40. His father was Romanian, his mother French, and he spent his early years in France. In 1922, he returned to Romania, where he attended high school and college. In 1936, he married Rodica Burileanu, with whom he relocated (permanently, this time) to France during World War II. They had one daughter, Marie-France. Although he had dabbled at writing since his youth, Ionesco did not begin his nonetheless productive career in letters until 1950, with the production of his play "The Bald Soprano" at the Théâtre des Noctambules. His breakthrough came in 1960 with the production of "Rhinoceros," which was enthusiastically received on both sides of the Atlantic. In all, Ionesco wrote some 30 plays, as well as a novel, short stories, dramatic theory, children's fairy tales, and several books of memoirs. He also painted and produced lithographs, activities he preferred, in his later years, to writing. Ionesco's literary accomplishments did not go unnoticed by France's cultural establishment: in 1970, he was elected to the Académie Française and, in 1991, his collected plays were published in the elite "Pléiade" edition.

In his plays, Ionesco strove to return to the sources of theater. Rejecting the "social realism" of more ideological playwrights like Sartre and Brecht, he sought to delve deeper into the more fundamental reality of universal man's dreams, obsessions, and fears. His tools in this endeavor were banality, caricature, exaggeration, parody, repetition, illogicality, violence, symbolism, puns, rhythm, gesture, and props. Following the modern painters who had rediscovered and rejuvenated painting by reducing scenes and objects to their most basic units, Ionesco aimed at purifying drama by pulling apart conventional characters and breaking down false theatrical idioms. While this style is often termed "Theater of the Absurd," he preferred the label "Theater of Derision"; he argued that life is by nature absurd (as well as tragic) and that the best way to reveal absurdity is through derision. "[T]he comic is tragic," he wrote in an essay entitled "Experience of the Theater," and "the tragedy of man is pure derision." This conception of drama was influenced by the Punch and Judy shows that he enjoyed as a young child in the Luxembourg Gardens in Paris: "It was the very image of the world that appeared to me, strange and improbable but truer than true, in the profoundly simplified form of caricature, as though to stress the grotesque and brutal nature of the truth," he later noted.

Ionesco's dramatic explorations of this truth met with criticism from both the right and the left. Ionesco was often dismissed as a joker; he was also frequently disdained for his lack of a social or political conscience. Kenneth Tynan and George Orwell, for example, criticized him (in a series of exchanges in the London *Observer* in the late 1950's) for his inaction in society and his abdication of politics; Ionesco's refusal to take part in the ideological battles of the Cold War era was, in their eyes, tantamount to surrender. The playwright's response to such detraction illustrated his deep un-

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derstanding of the human condition. Arguing that it is not any particular society that is derisory but rather man himself, Ionesco gave the lie to the liberal fallacy that humans can be saved through social or political means. Unlike Tynan, who hoped that we may "some day . . . free ourselves from the rusty hegemony of Angst," Ionesco realized that Heaven is not now and will never be of this world. Conscious of man's original sin, he knew better than to believe, like so many deluded modernists, that man can implement what God has not wrought: "No society," he wrote in reply to Tynan, "has been able to abolish human sadness, no political system can deliver us from the pain of living, from our fear of death, our thirst for the absolute; it is the human condition that directs the social condition, not vice versa." In accepting this basic reality (and in depicting it in his plays), Ionesco was the very opposite of neutral or disengaged: battling despair, he kept on creating, attempting through his writing to increase awareness of the way things are. For him, what mattered was his "conflict with the universe." As the French newspaper *Le Quotidien* summarized his outlook, "He knew that man is embarked on this voyage. He trembled before the eternal silence of the infinite spaces. But he cupped his ear to listen." And, buried in his writings, there was a glimmer of hope. In a written answer to a question posed to him by a publication called *Bref*, he anticipated a revolt that would "restore man's inner life, his real humanity, his freedom and equilibrium."

Yet, because his attitude was more existential than religious, Ionesco did fear death. Indeed, this fear permeates his work. As Roger Planchon asserted in *Le Figaro* on the day after his death, Ionesco was "an author who, his whole life, meditated about death. . . . All of his plays concern death. All his life, he reflected on this subject, pen in hand. He makes me think of those monks of the 16th century who slept in their coffins, surrounded by heads of the dead, and had always in mind the idea of death." In what he termed his "literary testament" (first published in *Le Figaro* in December 1993), Ionesco revealed the profound sense of fear and anguish he felt in his last days: "[God] did not abolish death for me, something that I find inadmissible. . . . Man does not appear on earth in order to live. He appears in order to decline and die." Although Ionesco certainly felt this most strongly in his old age, it was something that had obsessed him for a long time. In a talk that inaugurated the Helsinki Debates on the Avant-Garde Theater in 1959, he referred to Brendan Behan's "The Quare Fellow," in which "death has the leading role" as all of the characters await the execution of a condemned man. The same could also be said of Ionesco's own play "Amédée Or How to Get Rid of It," in which a petit-bourgeois couple is persecuted by a corpse that has been in their apartment for 15 years. As the body literally grows to fill the two rooms of the apartment, the couple realizes how much time they have wasted tiptoeing around the "skeleton in [their] closet." Toward the beginning of the play, the wife remarks in reference to the ever-expanding (and ever-aging) corpse that "the dead grow old faster than the living. . . . The dead are terribly vindictive. The living forget much sooner." May Ionesco rest in peace from what he feared so much, and may the living (even in America) not forget the real literary testament that he has left to us.

—*Christine Haynes*

Feminist jurisprudence, Philip Jenkins said in these pages, has been governed by an "unchallenged orthodoxy" when the issue is rape. It is that "women did not lie about such victimization, *never* lied, not out of personal malice, not from mental instability or derangement." Believing the self-proclaimed victim of rape has indeed evolved from ideological faith to legal doctrine and, in some jurisdictions, into law. California now requires that jurors be explicitly told that a rape conviction can be based on the accuser's testimony alone, without corroboration, and Canada would like men accused of rape to demonstrate that they received the willing consent of their sexual partner.

These new rules assume that women do not lie because they have no motive to lie. Consequently, as Jenkins states, the question of the "victim's credibility" has now become "crucial." Is that credibility warranted? Is it, as feminist jurisprudence would want it established, to be nearly automatic? Not if we consult recent history.

The record shows, for example, a growing number of recanted rape charges. The most celebrated occurred in 1985 when Gary Dotson, who after six years in prison, was released when his accuser, Cathleen Webb, confessed to perjury. More recently we learned that Tawana Brawley's sensational charges were a total fabrication. So was the story of a gang rape in College Station, Texas, perpetrated, it was charged, by Texas A&M Corps of Cadets members on a female cadet. So also was the rape of a Princeton coed reported at a "Take Back the Night Rally" and the alleged rape of a naval officer at the 1991 Tailhook Convention.

In spite of vehement feminist protestations to the contrary, such recantations are not rare. They are, in fact, part of a pattern revealed in several false allegation studies. An annual F.B.I. survey of 1600 law enforcement agencies, for example, discovered that over eight percent of rape charges are completely unfounded. That figure, which has held steadily over the past decade, is at least twice as high as for any other felony. Unfounded charges of assault (which, like rape, is often productive of conflicting testimony) comprise only 1.6 percent of the total compared to the 8.4 percent recorded for rape.

Consult also a recent development, DNA testing, which is now becoming routine in rape investigations. Also routine is the discovery that a third of the DNA scans produce nonmatches. Consequently, a growing number of men are not only gaining acquittals but are also winning release from prison. As with all rape statistics, these figures need careful scrutiny. Police investigators warn, for example, that a mismatch proves innocence only when the DNA could have come from no one but the assailant and when its profile or makeup doesn't match the suspect's. Even so, DNA tests, primarily a prosecutorial weapon, have now been added to the arsenal of defense attorneys, and more evidence of false allegations is appearing.

Although useful, the F.B.I. and DNA data result from unstructured number-gathering. More informative, therefore, are the results of a study by a team headed by Charles P. McDowell of the U.S. Air Force Special Studies Division. The McDowell team studied 556 rape allegations. Of that total, 256 could not be conclusively verified as rape. That left 300 authenticated cases of which 220 were judged to be truthful and 80, or 27 *percent*, were judged by very strict standards to be false.

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Using independent reviewers, the team had the more ambiguous 256 cases checked out. The team also examined police files from two major cities for data from nonmilitary sources. Both studies validated the 27 percent false allegation rate. In fact, the rate for the two sample cities was even higher. Further corroboration occurred in a 1991/92 survey of seven Washington, D.C., area jurisdictions. Using F.B.I. standards, investigators found that of 1,842 rape reports 439, or 24 percent, could not be substantiated.

F.B.I. standards themselves may produce unrealistically small numbers, the source of many statements that "only" nine percent of rape accusations are false or unfounded. Warren Farrell, who checked into the F.B.I.'s procedures, reports that the Bureau "knows the number of women who reported they were raped, but not whether the rapist was found guilty or innocent. In 47 percent of the cases, the alleged rapist has not even been identified or found, or if he has been found, there was insufficient evidence to arrest him. The remaining 53 percent were arrested, but *the F.B.I. doesn't receive data as to whether they were eventually found guilty or innocent*. In brief, as far as the F.B.I. knows, the percentage of false accusations overall could be anywhere from zero to 100 percent."

Even so, the feminist belief that rape accusers never lie continues to shape popular perceptions and government policy. Alan Dershowitz, one of the women's movement's most devoted friends, has nevertheless challenged the belief, making a point that should, outside of the ideological hardcore, win general agreement. "We simply must find out the truth about this vexing phenomenon," he said. "Too many zealots have too much of a stake in minimizing—or even denying—the problem of false rape reports." Dershowitz should know something about zealotry from personal experience. When he suggested in class that some rape accusations might be false, a group of feminist students threatened him with a charge of "hostile environment" sexual harassment.

—Frank Zepezauer

OBITER DICTA: Look for *Chronicles* at the following bookstores in Colorado: Boulder Book Store, 1107 Pearl Street in Boulder; Lakewood Newsland, 6601B W. Colfax Avenue in Lakewood; Southwest Newsland, 5066 S. Wadsworth Boulevard in Littleton; and Media Play, Citadel Crossing Shopping Center in Colorado Springs.

We would like to announce that this year's John Randolph Club meeting, on "The American Identity," will be held from October 21 to 23 at the Crystal City Marriott, 1999 Jefferson Davis Highway, in Arlington, Virginia 22202-3564. The Crystal City Marriott is located near Washington National Airport directly atop the Crystal City Metro station. Hotel rooms (for which John Randolph Club attendees are entitled to a special rate of $85, single or double) may be reserved before September 30 by calling Marriott's toll-free number, (800) 228-9290. Reservations for the conference itself should be made with Burt Blumert of the Center for Libertarian Studies; Crown Building; 875 Mahler Road, Suite 150; Burlingame, CA 94010; telephone (415) 692-8456. The registration fee is $250 (annual dues included), but early birds who get their checks to Mr. Blumert by September 30 pay only $225. For more information, please see the advertisement on page 11.

Finally, the Center of North American Studies at the University of Alcalá de Henares has issued a call for articles on any aspect of American Studies—literature, history, anthropology, economics, politics, popular culture, etc.—for its Spanish Journal of North American Studies, *REDEN* (*Revista Española de Estudios Norteamericanos*). Manuscripts, in either Spanish or English, may be sent to José Antonio Gurpegui; Centro de Estudios Norteamericanos; Universidad de Alcalá de Henares; c/o Libreros, 13; 28801 Alcalá de Henares, Madrid, Spain.

Roses For the National Gallery

(Dedicated to Douglas W. Reynolds)

by Harold McCurdy

Pamela Harrison to J. Carter Brown:
"Here's a gift of some roses by Vincent van Gogh.
He got not a sou for them, but Christie's might knock
At a proper auction the man's canvas down
For a cool 50 million and not cause a shock
To the uprightest Cato in town. For what would a Senator care
What happened to Vincent at Arles or Auvers?

"The roses are white, new-fallen-snow-white. No blood or sex
Disturbs the cool green of the leaves in the squat yellow pot.
Hung in the East Wing they'd attract quite a lot
Of favorable attention from those one respects—
People who have taste, and money, and plenty of schlock,
As was never the case with Vincent van Gogh."

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by Samuel Francis

Secessionist Fantasies

Throughout the first half of the present year, "secession" became the new watchword for a growing number of people on the American right. Economist Walter Williams has written at least two newspaper columns openly advocating secession. Jeffrey Tucker of the Ludwig von Mises Institute describes secession as "the cutting-edge issue that defines today's anti-statism," and Tom Bethell in the *American Spectator* writes that "secession" is "the counterrevolutionary word that I have begun to hear from some of my conservative friends." Of course, if the word were uttered only by conservatives, the normal folk of the country would never hear anything sensible about it, and what makes the revival of secessionism interesting if not yet important is precisely the fact that a good many nonconservatives are starting to bat it back and forth, occasionally even in public.

There is, for example, a movement in the Northwestern United States and Western Canada to promote at least a more autonomous regional identity for, if not actual political separation of, the area called "Cascadia"—based mainly on what are taken to be the region's distinctive economic interests and the constraints that membership in Canada and the United States place on the pursuit of such interests. Then there was the effort of Staten Island to secede from New York last year and a similar effort by the Eastern Shore of Maryland to secede this year, in addition to the attempts of Northern and Southern California to divorce each other every year. Finally, there is the politically serious movement led by a group known as the Committee of 50 States, which promotes a measure called "The Ultimate Resolution." This proposal would essentially fire the President, members of Congress, and federal judges if and when it is approved by the legislatures of three-fourths of the states and the federal budget reaches $6 trillion. It is in essence a measure for secession, since it would declare, with intended legally binding force, that the existing federal government no longer has authority over the states. And, on top of these several more or less serious movements, there are always the Southern flag-wavers whose fantasies about standing up to the Yankees just one more time, if they never achieve anything concrete, at least perpetuate the myth of secession as a feasible alternative to the hard work of reconquering North America from the savages into whose hands the Yankees allowed it to fall.

Secessionism of any stripe, of course, has not been a serious political movement since the 1850's, and even then it was difficult enough for those who pushed it to get it to take wing. It did not take wing except when the election of Lincoln and the Republican Party in 1860 made it clear to the slaveholding interests of the Deep South that their predominance within a united state was entering its twilight. Elsewhere in the South secession was explicitly rejected until Lincoln, either by deliberate design or by the most colossal blunder in American history, called for the mobilization of 75,000 troops in reaction to the Confederate firing on Fort Sumter. It was thus the prospect of military invasion and conquest, and neither allegiance to slavery nor adherence to a particular view of the Constitution, that precipitated the secession of the Upper South and made civil war all but unavoidable.

What this little history lesson suggests, and what similar and less successful bouts of secessionism in American history also suggest, is that secession is typically an option for losers, a path that is taken or touted only when all others have been closed off, and not a choice that is selected because of its intrinsic theoretical merits or the bright practical prospects it offers. As for its theoretical merits, they are admittedly considerable. The theory of secession normally rests upon the doctrine of state sovereignty in the Constitution, and the circumstances surrounding the drafting and ratification of the Constitution make it reasonably clear that the Framers did not intend for the new federal government to be able to use force against the states. No such power was granted to the federal government, and three states at the time of ratification explicitly reserved the right to resume their sovereignty as they chose. In the text of the Constitution it is clearly the states themselves, and not the "people," that are the fundamental units of government, the units that are represented in the Senate, that elect the President, that ratify amendments to the Constitution.

Lincoln's argument against secession in his First Inaugural responded to none of these points. He argued mainly from the nature of a national government (thereby begging the question as to whether the federal government was in fact a "national" government in the sense he intended), and, knowingly or from ignorance, he distorted the essence of the secessionist argument by claiming that secession would lead to anarchy, each seceding unit in time breaking up into still smaller ones because the process of fragmentation, once begun, could not logically be halted. The obvious response to Lincoln's claim is that units smaller than the states are not sovereign and have no legitimate basis for asserting sovereignty and that units at the substate level such as counties, cities, or townships are themselves creatures of the state government in a way that the states most definitely are not the creatures of the federal government. Lincoln's pseudo-argument in fact inverts the very nature of the American federalist system; designed as a system in which the federal government was created by the states, the system becomes in Lincoln's assertions one in which the states are essentially the creatures and subordinates of Washington. But of course it was the United States government itself that violated Lincoln's own argument when, under his presidency and for obvious military reasons, it endorsed the secession of West Virginia from Virginia once the Upper South had taken its leave of the Union and started sharpening its sabers.

Nor, apart from Lincoln's banalities, is there much in our history, either before or after the Civil War, to suggest that the case for secession is a flawed one. New Englanders, the most ardent of nationalists when the vile slaveholders of the South sought to go their own way, were

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the first to invoke secessionist pretenses on the eve of the unpopular War of 1812, and Abolitionists, always a sour crew, later proposed secession because by their own admission they were just too morally pure to remain part of a Republic that also harbored such knaves as slaveowners. As with the Southern secessionists of the 1850's and 1860, these earlier apostles of separation were losers, parties unable to persuade the rest of the country to follow the courses they demanded and unwilling to travel the route the rest of the country wanted to adopt. Probably no one has ever advocated secession, let alone been willing to die for it, simply on its own merits; almost every secessionist has chosen it because, at the time he did, there simply was nothing else for him to choose, short of the unpalatable path of abiding by the rules of the political game and shutting up.

And so it is today. The reason secession is being bruited about in the dark corners of the land, from Alaska to Annapolis and from Staten Island to San Diego, is that its partisans have simply lost all serious hope of gaining victory for their particular causes. Those muttering about secession for regional economic reasons know very well, at least as well as Deep South slaveowners in 1860 knew, that their particular interests are not sufficiently significant to other people in the nation ever to gain the satisfaction they want and need, so that leaving the larger national political unit and forming a smaller unit that they can more easily dominate is the obvious course to take. There is no reason to be too cynical about such naked attempts to fracture the nation for the purpose of serving particular (and often private) economic interests. The fact is that such movements are commonplace throughout history, and there is no right or wrong to them. Those interests strong enough to sustain secession or independence get away with it; the others go down in history as scoundrels or as foolish romantics who bucked history's tides.

But, precisely because some evolving regional economic interests are beginning to find they can no longer gain satisfaction by remaining in the present American nation-state, there is also beginning to be some ideological flutter about secession on the right. Here again secession is a game for losers. Those on the political right who have expressed sympathy for secession are among the best, the smartest, and the most principled conservatives and libertarians in the country, but their problem is that they, too, have basically lost. Unable to gain sufficient political support for their beliefs in the existing nation-state, they find themselves doomed to a lingering extinction if they remain within its political boundaries. The only path open to them now is secession, or at least so they imagine.

My own view is that secession—or regionalism or separatism or whatever we want to call it—is actually not a path that is open to us. It is quite true that we could conceivably succeed in mustering a movement somewhere in the United States to pull off an act of secession, though it is not at all clear who "we" are or what the seceding units might be. Assuming "we" eventually figure out who "we" are and what exactly is going to se-

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cede, if secession were to take place without violent resistance, the only hope for it would be to persuade the existing political regime to grant a right to it. A right to secession can pertain only to states—not to regions, races, religions, or ideological reflexes, which are often the proposed seceding "units." Moreover, it is all but inconceivable that the existing national regime would ever grant any explicit right to secede from it—for the same reason that Lincoln understood. Acknowledgment of any such right is, if not a prescription for anarchy as Lincoln claimed, at least a prescription for the suicide of the larger unit that acknowledges it, and to recognize the secession of one unit or group would lead at once to recognition of every other unit aspiring to independence. What that means in practice is that those asserting a "right to secession" can never expect to gain recognition of it, that if they are serious about it they have to expect to fight for it, and that assertion of a right to secession ultimately is more or less identical to an assertion of a right to revolution. This brings us back to where we came in.

The American right is beginning to tinker with the idea of secession because the serious right, like most of the secessionists who preceded it, is now beginning to perceive that it has lost—that neither Good Old Dutch nor his all-but-forgotten successor nor any of the leading candidates for President in 1996 achieved or can achieve much of anything that the serious right wants and that there appears to be no reasonable way at this point to mobilize yet another popular political movement able to recapture the country from the forces of the left. The most that Reagan, Bush, Quayle, et al., succeeded in accomplishing was to teach the left wing of the Democratic Party how to mouth sounds about "family values," low taxes, and patriotism and to instruct politicians of all stripes in the subtle art of holding office for more than a decade without even trying to fulfill any of the promises and principles by which they gained office in the first place.

But the sad truth is that the serious right will be unable to make use of secessionism as an alternative to political victory within the present nation-state for the same reasons it has lost the political contest in the first place. The right has lost the political contest within the nation simply because it lacks, and is generally uninterested in gaining, sufficient cultural power and influence to sustain a political victory. Even when it wins elections, it lacks the power to govern, and it continually lacks the power to govern because the right refuses to understand that outside of a dictatorship you cannot govern unless you first enjoy cultural power.

What, then, would a successful secessionist system be like? Unless the right first undertakes and completes its own long march through the culture, a secessionist system would merely replicate most of the flaws, vices, errors, misconceptions, and dominant interests that now afflict the larger nation. It is easy to say that the vicious habits and interests that have brought the nation to its present pass are all located in Washington, and if only we could get rid of Washington (or New York, or Hollywood) all would be well. The truth is that corruption and oppression flourish in Washington, New York, and Hollywood because they either sprout from state and local ground or are tolerated, rewarded, and encouraged at those levels of government by the very people who are supposed to remove these wicked ways by seceding from them.

Secessionism, then, is at best one more fantasy by which the right can avoid dealing with the problems it and the nation face and doing what it has to do if it ever wants to accomplish anything more than chatter and fundraising. The American right has long been full of such fantasies, usually centered on a return to some mythical past golden age where all was well. The utopia of the past has varied from faction to faction of the right—the Middle Ages, the Old South, the *Ancien Régime*, the Gilded Age, the pre-New Deal 1920's, or (for neoconservatives) the era of Cold War liberalism of the 1950's and 60's. What the American right has never done is try to construct, slowly and patiently, an apparatus of cultural power that can challenge the corruption that now dominates the nation, attract a following from the contemporary American mainstream, and sustain whatever political efforts the right is able to undertake. Once the right wants to do that and is able to do it, then it might also be able to lead a secessionist movement that could achieve something worth achieving. But of course once the right is able to take back its culture, it won't need to follow the losers' road of secessionism anyway. ◁c

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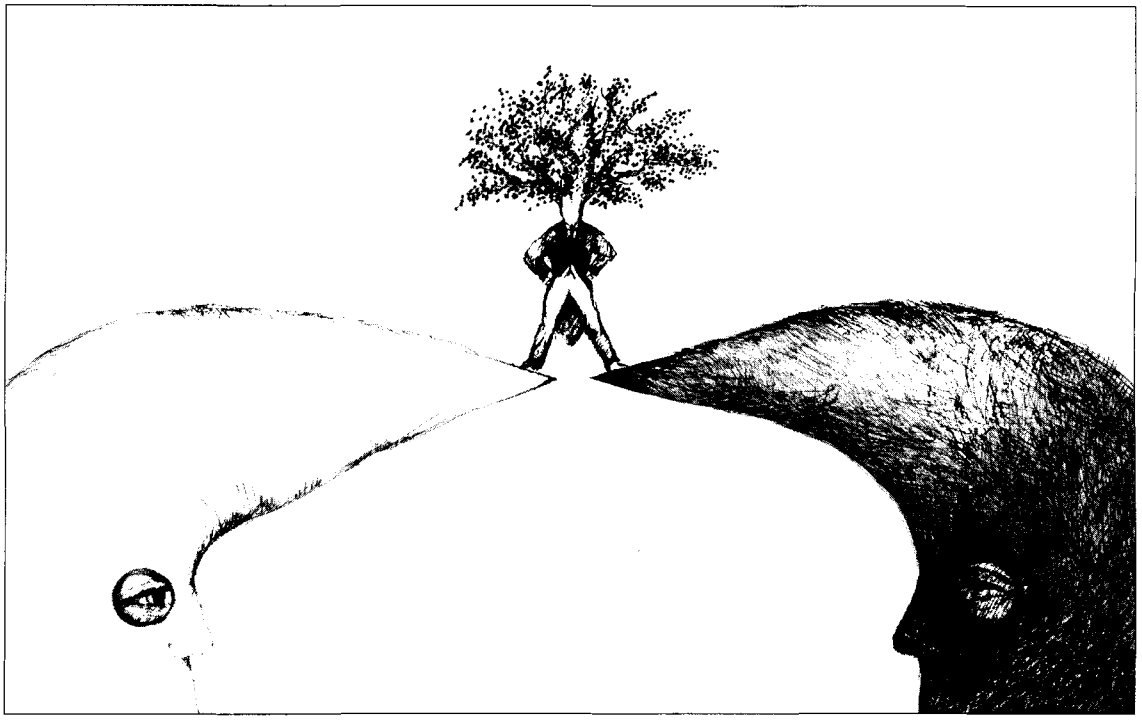

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Equality or Privilege

Gored on the Horns of the American Dilemma

by Thomas Fleming

"Everything in American politics always comes down to the race question," says one of our collaborators. School choice plans, for example, are either condemned for enabling the white middle classes to liberate their children from the hell of public schools or praised for giving black families the prospect of sending their children to the suburbs. The war on drugs is undertaken to save "inner-city youth" from the consequences of their misbehavior and criticized for targeting minorities. When the police beef up patrols in black neighborhoods they are accused of harassment and, when they slack off, of neglect. (Throw in the homosexual rights question, and the cops are in an impossible bind, as in the Jeffrey Dahmer case, where one sensitivity blunted another.)

The race question is most pernicious in anything relating to federalism. Trying to make a case for states' rights or local control, I am always asked how I would prevent one group (by which they always mean whites) from oppressing another (that is, blacks). At the Ludwig von Mises Institute's superb May conference on the "Costs of War," the panelists more or less agreed that the War Between the States was a just war asserting the South's independence. Inevitably, someone in the audience played the race card: If you believe in national liberation, does that mean you would support a slave revolt?

Different people gave different answers, all of them good, but as I tried to explain, the question is irrelevant, if not entirely fatuous. My response would depend entirely on which side I was on. If I were a slave, the son and husband and father of slaves who were revolting, I should inevitably side with my own people, but if I were a master, I should have no choice but to defend my wife and children against a mob that, if it did not kill them, would make them long for death.

Consider for a moment the history of Haiti. Admittedly, French rule was nothing so benignant as plantation slavery in the Old South, but the butchery of women and children that attended Haitian liberation was only the prelude to nearly two centuries of repression and murder, which, by comparison, makes Cabrini Green seem like Wilmette. In retrospect, the wisest and most humane political leader in Haitian history was Papa Doc Duvalier, who employed both physical and metaphysical terrorism in a disciplined campaign to keep his tur-

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bulent people quiet.

If I were a black political leader in the United States, the last thing I should do is call for American involvement in Haiti; indeed, at all costs, I should do everything I could to make people forget there ever was a Haiti. But their protests, demonstrations, and hunger strikes all serve to remind us that the black political class does not want anything like equality—if black leaders wanted equality, they would also be demanding invasions of Ireland, Yugoslavia, China, and the Caucasus. What they want is power, a system of reverse Jim Crow that rewards blacks for being black and punishes whites for being white. The polite name for this system is affirmative action.

By 1995 American neoconservatives will have opened a new chapter in racial discourse. If one can read the signs correctly, they will soon be following the lead of trailblazers like Michael Levin, who have been arguing that affirmative action is evil because it is based on the false premise of racial equality. I am less than thrilled at the prospect of liberal intellectuals going through one more well-advertised round of second thoughts. Who cares what they think about anything? In their hatred of American bourgeois civilization, Northeastern intellectuals have used every weapon at their disposal: they ridiculed our writers and artists and demonized our national history, they liberalized our criminal justice system, they imposed the socialism that is sapping America's economic vitality, and they created the civil rights revolution that has sparked the race war in which we find ourselves today. To hell with them all, I say. If black and white Americans are going to learn to live with each other, it will be no thanks to the intellectual class that has designed the cockpit and equipped both sides with spurs.

Of course the human races and ethnic groups are different. Only an idiot or a liar would attempt to deny what is patent to anyone. Skin color and hair type are only symbols of a constellation of genetic differences that are responsible for gross statistical variations in physical strength and agility, emotional and behavioral norms, and the various components of intelligence. Since this civilization and culture were created by ethnic groups from Northern Europe, it is inevitable that such groups will do well in a society that they are by nature adapted to live in.

All that is obvious and not worth fighting over, except for the fact that the intellectuals have been lying to us for almost the entire century. It is also comparatively trivial for a free society, because statistical generalizations cannot predict individual outcomes. In any mixed society, some minority members will always prove to be better fitted to succeed than some majority members. Even in the Old South, there were blacks—slaves as well as free—who felt themselves socially superior to white trash like Huck Finn's pap (or Abe Lincoln's pap, for that matter). Pap Finn, on seeing a free Negro in town, could not believe his eyes:

> There was a free nigger there, from Ohio; a mulatter, most as white as a white man. He had the whitest shirt on you ever seen, too, and the shiniest hat. . . . And what do you think? They said he was a p'fessor in a college, and could talk all kinds of languages, and knowed everything. And that ain't the wust. They said he could *vote*, when he was at home. Well, that let me out. Thinks I, what is the country a-coming to? It was 'lection day, and I was about to go and vote, myself, if I warn't too drunk to get there; but when they told me there was a state in this country where they'd let that nigger vote, I drawed out. I says I'll never vote again.

Pap Finn did not have to go to Ohio to find successful blacks. In the older Southern states, a class of free black artisans and tradesmen thrived in cities like Baltimore, Richmond, and Charleston, and after the war, the black middle class grew in numbers and prosperity throughout the country, even despite the laws in virtually every state that restricted their right to full participation in political life. Looking back at the 1940's and 50's, it is hard for an honest man not to regard those decades as the highwater mark of black life in these United States.

Leave me alone to make my own mistakes, and I may eventually come round to treating people as human beings, but force me to share my wealth, do business and socialize with 'aliens,' I will balk like a mule and find reasons to hate them.

It is not that things were perfect, by any means, not that decent black people were not subjected to the degrading rituals by which inferior whites made themselves feel good at their expense. But Jim Crow laws were falling into neglect by a slow and organic process of national evolution, and able and talented men and women were working their way to success and respectability, no thanks to the usually benign neglect of whites.

A reasonable and civilized white American in those years could not fail to admire the progress and sympathize with the legal struggle to strike down the last formal barriers to full legal and political equality. Anyone writing such a sentence is obviously thinking of himself as "reasonable and civilized," and in fact, in the folly of youth, I participated on the fringes of a civil rights movement that was, as I remember a black nationalist telling me, none of my business. That nationalist is now, by the way, a successful proponent of black enterprise in Charleston.

If I had either the time or the inclination, I could try to explain how the civil rights movement was wrong from the start, rooting itself in the false assumption that blacks could only be happy if they were able to rub shoulders with whites in schools and restaurants and in the evil premise that moral decisions can be coerced by government. Leave me alone to make my own mistakes, and I may eventually come round to treating people as human beings, but force me to share my wealth, do business and socialize with "aliens," I will balk like a mule and find reasons to hate them.

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A liberal society of the type that existed from the 1870's through the 1920's and lingered on, in some ways, to the 1950's is based on a few simple premises: legal equality for citizens, the protection of private property, the right of people to mind their own business. There have always been people—black and white—who argued that the solution to the American dilemma lay in the application of liberal principles. Strike down the vestiges of black codes and Jim Crow laws and allow blacks to make their way, as best they can, in society.

There are obvious problems with this argument. First of all, it violates certain basic constitutional principles that make it perfectly possible and legal for states and localities to practice discrimination. No one who believes in a federal system can accept the premise of the 14th Amendment, even when it is most harmlessly pursued. On the other hand, it would be naive to suppose that simply because *some* blacks will succeed in a liberal state, all will. In a powerful and coherent Anglo-American society, Southern and Eastern Europeans have some difficulty in adapting, and the ethnic and cultural problems are far more serious for Indians, Southeast Asians, and African-Americans. Under any natural circumstances, one would imagine a slow process of upward circulation among these groups and certainly nothing like an instant realization of the revolutionary demand for social and economic equality we used to hear from Martin Luther King.

For all its demerits, though, the liberal approach may be best suited to a country that believes (however erroneously) that its institutions are founded on Lockean premises, and only liberal arguments are sufficiently compelling to persuade the white ruling classes to give up a hegemony based in part on race and ethnic origin. Although I am not now and never have been any kind of liberal—classical, neo-, social democratic—I am prepared to accept the proposals of Walter Williams as the best possible solution to the racial conflicts that are tearing apart the nation: destroy all artificial barriers that privilege either blacks or whites, enforce the law equally, protect private property. If people wish to discriminate in their business life, then they will forfeit any profits they might make by buying from and selling to blacks. If they want to form all-white societies and march around in sheets, it is nobody's business so long as they do not attack persons or property. Disliking people for irrational reasons should not be—as it is today—a criminal offense. As Sam Ervin used to say, "The Constitution of the United States gives every man the right to make a damn fool of himself."

Walter Williams is, in my view, one of the most sensible political commentators in America: he is levelheaded, even-tempered, and consistent in applying the principles of classical liberalism. When he took over for a week from Rush Limbaugh, it brought back memories of how conservative, really, such liberals and libertarians used to be. But it is precisely the intelligence and fairness of his positions that may doom them to failure. Liberalism is, after all, only an evolutionary transition between different forms of authoritarian social structures, but in America and in Britain, liberalism has sunk in deep enough to shape institutions and even national conscience, and the race question will be the final test of its durability.

If we cannot be liberals in matters of race, what are the other choices? Leftists of the Democratic Party tell me that it is my duty to support and strengthen affirmative action quotas in employment, minority set-asides in business and government, and compulsory integration of schools—all on a vaster scale than was ever contemplated before. Leftists of the Republican Party ask me to support affirmative action plans that they deny are quotas, minority set-aside programs that they describe as "empowerment," and vast integration schemes that they are selling under the label "school choice." Why cannot truth-in- advertising regulations be applied to politicians?

My answer, and the answer of any person whose brain has not been numbed by reading the platforms of both parties, is a simple NO. Appeal to my sense of fair play and justice, if you like, and I shall agree that for the good of the entire country, it is better for me not to claim any special privileges on the basis of my race or ancestral nationality. On this kind of level playing field, I can only assume my own children will do well, with all the advantages that fond and doting parents can lavish upon them. But if you are seriously asking me to give up my money, my opportunities, and my rights in order to benefit someone else's kids, some other people, another race, then you must be crazy.

If we cannot live in a liberal society, then we are are forced back upon an older set of rules that have nothing to do with fair play or equality under the law. The older rules, prescribed by genes and inculcated by human experience, constitute the law of loyalty to family, to kin, and to nation. If some group in this society is to have advantages and privileges, then let it be mine; if someone's child is to be given a leg up on the ladder of success, let it be my child; and if some other tribe thinks it can muscle in on my watering hole, my grazing land, my shopping mall, then let them try it—but they had better be prepared to die. It is as simple as that. Many (if not most) black people already subscribe to this code—they certainly act as if they do, and they can only expect that their privileged status will convert other groups to the same principle.

If black Americans want equality in a free society under liberal rules, they can have it with my blessing. If they want me to offer up my children as a sacrifice on the altar of racial guilt, then I must tell them: equality is not God, and neither as Christians nor as Jews are we called upon to emulate Abraham, either the Old Testament patriarch who would kill his child to show his faith or the racist demagogue who would destroy his country to gratify his ambition. If sane and wise people like Walter Williams are not heeded, then the only alternative is the ever-spreading race war that has already engulfed the socialist cities of the United States.

Do not be fooled by the vast numbers of white Americans who, out of cowardice or mental weakness, are willing to put up with any oppression in the pursuit of peace or "justice." Revolutions are not made by majorities any more than they can be unmade by them. The American Revolution was fought and won by the roughly one-third of colonial Americans who had had enough. That is probably the same proportion of whites today who have also had enough. If anyone—and here I am speaking to the neoconservatives so eagerly leaping on the racist bandwagon—is looking forward to such a future, he is making a terrible mistake, not only because of the carnage and devastation that is to come, but because it may not matter, ultimately, who wins such a war. If middle-class whites prove to be as weak as they sometimes seem, then they will be carved up like so much meat in the abattoir, and if they win they will join the ranks of the genocidal nations of history: the Turks, the Bosnian Muslims, the Nazi Germans, the Russian communists, and the only legacy we shall be able to pass on to our children—other than their lives—will be a burden of shame and lies.

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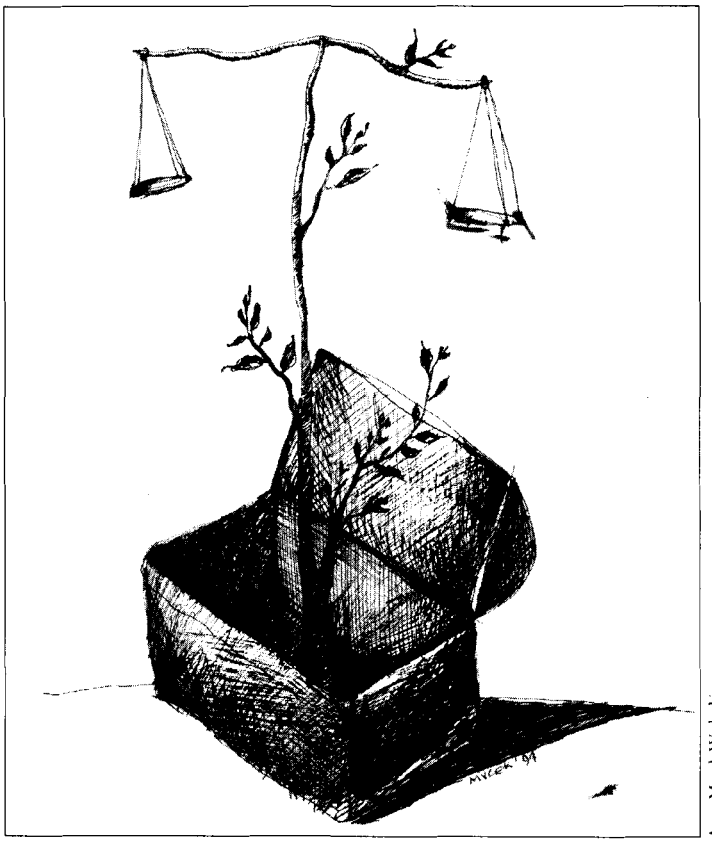
Life in the Old Right

by Murray N. Rothbard



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

One problem with labeling ideological movements "old" or "new" is that inevitably, with the passage of time, the "new" becomes an "old" and the markers get confusing. In the modern, post-World War II right wing, there have been a number of "news" and hence "olds" over the past half-century. But what I call the "Old Right" has an excellent claim to that label; for it was the original, oldest right, and it was in many ways radically different from all the rights that have followed after its demise.

This original right of which I speak, and of which I am one of the few survivors, stretched from 1933 to its approximate death, or fading away, upon the advent of *National Review* in 1955. The Old Right began in 1933 in response to the coming of the New Deal. It was "reactionary" in the best and most genuine sense: it was a horrified reaction against the Roosevelt Revolution, against the Great Leap Forward toward collectivism that enraptured socialist intellectuals and enraged those who were devoted to the institutions and the strict limitations on centralized government power that marked the Old Republic.

Last fall, David Lauter, writing a think-piece in the *Los Angeles Times* about the Clinton health plan, wittingly or unwittingly echoed Maoist terminology about this Great Leap Forward, declaring that "every so often . . . the government collectively braces itself, takes a deep breath, and leaps into a largely unknown future." The Clinton health plan is such a leap, Lauter noted; the previous Great Leap was the civil rights laws of the 1960's; and before that, in perhaps the primordial leap, was the New Deal of the 1930's, when the nation agreed "to give the federal government a whole new set of responsibilities—from providing social security for the elderly to establishing a new system of national regulatory agencies to monitor the economy."

A fairly good summation, except that instead of the "nation" agreeing to give powers to the government the New Deal proceeded in the manner of all nonviolent revolutions: it was the federal government and its new rulers that seized power, drove through a flurry of socialistic measures, and then won "agreement" by using the levers of propaganda and opinion-molding in society, as well as by relying on the sheer force of inertia and habit once the new institutions were in place.

The Old, original, Right realized the horrors of the New Deal and predicted the collectivist road on which it was setting the nation. The Old Right was a coalition of ideologies and forces that did not have one single, common, positive program,

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but "negatively" it was solidly united: all opposed the New Deal and were committed to its total repeal and abolition—lock, stock, and barrel. The fact that its unity was "negative" did not make it any less strong or cohesive: for there was total agreement on rolling back this collectivist excrescence and on restoring the Old Republic, the true America.

The Old Right coalition consisted of the following elements. Most "extreme" were the libertarian and individualist writers and intellectuals: H.L. Mencken, Albert Jay Nock, Rose Wilder Lane, Garet Garrett, all people who had resisted what they believed to be the mounting statism of the Republican regime of the 1920's and who called for an ultraminimal government that would have rolled back the statism of the Progressive period, the Civil War and Reconstruction eras, and perhaps the judicial despotism of Chief Justice John Marshall. Next came now virtually forgotten remnants of the conservative, states' rights Democrats of the 19th century, largely from the South, whose views were almost as libertarian as the first group's. These men were led by Governor Albert Ritchie of Maryland, who was a candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1932, and Senator James A. Reed from Missouri. The third group consisted of conservative Republicans who were outraged at New Deal democracy and who largely came from the Midwest. Former Progressives and statists, who believed that the New Deal was going much too far, formed the final group; its leader was former President Herbert Hoover, who, though he had launched many New Deal measures in microcosm in his own administration, denounced the New Deal for going too far into "fascism." It was the first group that set the tone, since individualist and libertarian rhetoric provided the only general concepts with which New Deal measures could be opposed. The result, however, was that hack Republican politicians found themselves mouthing libertarian and antistatist slogans that they did not really believe—a condition that set the stage for later "moderation" and abandonment of their seemingly cherished principles.

Unity in our hostility and hatreds, however, combined with diversity of positive principle, had a healthy effect on the Old Right. It meant that we could unite and act together in denouncing and moving against the New Deal enemy, while disagreeing and arguing in friendly fashion among ourselves about the kind of America we would ultimately like to achieve. How much government did we wish to roll back? Stop at 1932, or press onward to repeal Progressive measures or even the centralization of the 19th century? We were all committed to states' rights, but how far did we want to carry this view? A few libertarian extremists wanted to go *all the way* back to the Articles of Confederation, but the great bulk of the right was committed to the United States Constitution—but a Constitution construed so "strictly" as to outlaw much 20th-century legislation, certainly on the federal level.

In those days, it was a pleasure to pore over the voting records of right-wing Republicans in Congress, especially in the harder-core House, for the common garden-variety rightists of the pre-1955 era make the most right-wing congressmen today seem impossibly leftist and socialistic. My two favorite congressmen were Howard Buffett of Nebraska and Frederick C. Smith of Ohio, both of whom would invariably draw "zero" ratings from the Americans for Democratic Action and other leftist groups. I remember being disappointed that once in a while they might deviate by favoring a federal anti-lynching bill; did they not know that the federal government is not supposed to have any police powers?

Friendly disagreement on positive principles meant genuine and healthy diversity and freedom of discussion within right-wing circles. As Thomas Fleming noted with astonishment when researching the Old Right, there was no party line, and there was no organ or central GHQ that excommunicated "unrespectable" members. There was a wide spectrum of positive views: ranging from pure libertarian decentralization to Hamiltonian reliance on strong government within rigid limits to various wings of monarchists. And in all this diversity and range of discourse, no one would react in shock and horror to any "extreme" views—so long as the "extremism" did not mean selling out the fight against the New Deal. There was also a great deal of disagreement on specific policies that had been open questions in the Old, pre-New Deal, Republic: tariffs vs. free trade; immigration restrictions vs. open borders; and what constitutes a military or foreign policy truly consistent with American national interests.

The Old Right experienced one big sea change. Originally, its focus was purely domestic, since that was the concentration of the early New Deal. But as the Roosevelt administration moved toward world war in the late 1930's, the Old Right added intense opposition to the New Deal's war policies to its systemic opposition to the domestic New Deal revolution. For they realized that, as the libertarian Randolph Bourne had put it in opposing America's entry into World War I, "War is the health of the State" and that entry into large-scale war, especially for global and not national concerns, would plunge America into a permanent garrison state that would wreck American liberty and constitutional limits at home even as it extended the American imperium abroad. As anti-foreign interventionism was added to the anti-New Deal mix, the Old Right lost some adherents and gained even more. For Eastern Establishment anti-New Dealers, such as Lewis Douglas, William L. Clayton, Dean Acheson, and the Morgan Bank, embraced the entire New Deal package once it came wrapped in the enticing trappings of American Empire. On the other hand, antiwar progressives, originally New Dealers, men such as Senators William Borah and Gerald Nye, intellectuals and writers such as John T. Flynn and Harry Elmer Barnes, began to realize that there was something very wrong with a strong state that could expand into foreign adventures, and so they gradually became anti-New Dealers in every sense of the word.

World War II added foreign policy to the mix, so that by the end of the war, the Old Right was opposed to big government on every front, foreign and domestic. All parts of the right were opposed to global crusading, to what Clare Boothe Luce wittily labeled "globaloney." They were opposed to what the former New Deal historian-turned-noninterventionist Charles A. Beard labeled the foreign policy of "perpetual war for perpetual peace."

There have been many memoirs about being Jewish and growing up in New York in the 1930's and 1940's. Although I am a few years younger than most of the memoirists—Irving Howe, Irving Kristol, Daniel Bell, Alfred Kazin, etc.—my experience was in many ways the same. It was great being a Walker in the City in that bygone age. New York street life was vital and fun. There was no harassment, no sense of crime lurking around every corner. Whites would go up to the Apollo Theater in Harlem to watch Pearl Bailey and other great entertainers with no sense of fear whatever. There were

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no bums or aggressive beggars on the street; if anyone wanted to see a bum, they could go to a short street downtown called the Bowery, where bums or "winos" hung out. And even they were not strictly "homeless," as they lived in very cheap Bowery hotels. The streets teemed with fascinating characters hawking their nostrums and ideologies. Soapboxes in Union Square or Columbus Circle featured any speaker who wanted to get up and address the crowd. I remember with affection one elderly guy working the streets in the Wall Street area, earnestly hawking the idea that lemonade or lemon juice was the panacea for all bodily ills. And at that time, New York was studded with inexpensive cafeterias, where one could sit nursing a cup of coffee for hours and either read or discuss ideas undisturbed. One guy came to be called "Senator Mendel," from spending most of his hours in the Senator Cafeteria on the Upper West Side. Nowadays, of course, such cafeterias would be filled with aggressive bums and muggers, and quiet or discourse would be impossible.

Looking back on it, all the discussions and arguments I got into, whether in street, neighborhood, family, or school, were marked by an instinctive civility and courtesy. Even though there were lots of communists around, there were no angry squads of enforcers of political correctness or threats to send you to brainwashing or sensitivity training sessions. And even though I was, with the exception of my father, virtually the only rightist I knew personally, I was uniformly treated not with hostility but rather with reactions ranging from astonishment to amused affection.

The one important aspect in which my growing up differed from these other Jewish memoirists, of course, is that they were some species of communist or socialist, whereas I was a right-winger and bitterly antisocialist from the very beginning. I grew up in a communist culture; the middle-class Jews in New York whom I lived among, whether family, friends, or neighbors, were either communists or fellow-travelers in the communist orbit. I had two sets of Communist Party uncles and aunts, on both sides of my family. But more important, the one great moral question in the lives of all these people was: Should I actually join the Communist Party and devote the whole of my life to the cause, or should I remain a fellow-traveler and "selfishly" devote only a fraction of my energy to communism? That was it; any species of liberalism, let alone conservatism, was nonexistent. And, contrary to the fond memories of Kristol, Bell, Howe, et al., I never heard of a Trotskyist in this period. Trotskyism was confined to a few intellectuals and future academics; for middle-class New York Jewry, the political world revolved around the C.P. (In later years, there was a reality-based joke on the left: "Whatever happened to the Old Left? The Trotskyites went into academia, and the Stalinists went into real estate.")

The one exception to this communist milieu was my father, David. My father emigrated to the United States from a Polish *shtetl* in 1910, impoverished and knowing not a word of English. Like most immigrants of that era, he had resolved "to become an American" in every sense. And that meant, for him, not only learning English and making it his language, but also abandoning Yiddish papers and culture and purging himself of any foreign accent. It also meant devotion to the basic American Way: minimal government, belief in and respect for free enterprise and private property, and a determination to rise by one's own merits and not via government privilege or handout. Russian and Polish Jews before World War I were swept with communist, socialist, and Zionist ideologies and movements, or blends of the three. But my father never fell for any of them. An individualist rather than a socialist or tribalist, he believed his loyalty was to America rather than to Zionism or to any Zionist entity in the Middle East.

The last gasp of the Old Right in foreign policy was the defeat of the Bricker Amendment to the Constitution in 1954, an amendment that would have prevented international treaties from overriding American rights and powers. The amendment was sabotaged by the Eisenhower administration.

I grew up in the same spirit. All socialism seemed to me monstrously coercive and abhorrent. In one family gathering featuring endless pledges of devotion to "Loyalist" Spain during the Civil War, I piped up, at the age of 11 or 12, "What's wrong with Franco, anyway?" It didn't seem to me that Franco's sins, however statist, were any worse, to put it mildly, than those of the Republicans. My query was a conversation-stopper, all right, but I never received an answer.

When I shifted in early grades from the debasing and egalitarian public school system to a private school that I enjoyed a great deal, I found myself in another odd ideological climate. In those days, girls of the wealthier classes were protected, and so they were sent to a day school in New York, whereas upper-class boys were sent out of town to boarding school. The private day school I attended was coed, but it had difficulty attracting boys and was in danger of falling into all-girl status. As a result, they gave scholarships to bright, middle-class boys. The result was socially anomalous: the girls were all wealthy, driven to and from school in chauffeured limousines, whereas at least half the boys were scholarship lads such as myself. Another fascinating note was that the students were mostly, though not solely, Jewish, whereas the staff and instructors were all WASPs. None of the Jewish students felt oppressed by this situation; indeed, none of us felt aggrieved when every Friday we attended chapel, nondenominational to be sure, but singing glorious Christian hymns. None of the Jewish students felt anything but happily assimilated into what America—which was, after all, a WASP and Christian country—was all about.

But while none of my fellow high school students was a communist, they were all left-liberals, what came to be called in New York "Park Avenue" or "limousine" liberals—all too literally in their case. I soon became established as the school conservative, arguing strongly in the eighth grade against Roosevelt's introduction of the capital-gains tax in 1938 and later against Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia's left-wing policy of coddling

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criminals.

My reputation as the school rightist actually came in handy. In my junior year in high school, I was the supporter, in one of those meaningless school elections, of my friend Lloyd Marcus for school president or speaker or whatever the post was called. We thought we would be up-to-date politicos, so we happily had handbills printed up: "Lloyd Marcus: Charges and Facts." All of the "issues" were trivial. There was nothing ideological about them; only personal friendships were at stake. But tough old Miss Birch, the school founder, scented "communism" and "strike" at the very sign of a handbill. (Lloyd Marcus was the son of the fabulously wealthy Bernard K. Marcus, who had gone to jail as part of the Bank of the United States scandal. Lloyd was indeed a "Park Avenue leftist," but the difference in ideology between the pro-Marcus and anti-Marcus camps was trivial and irrelevant to the election.) The ringleaders in the Marcus camp were called into Miss Birch's office one by one and quizzed sternly about "communism" and whether we were affiliated with the American Student Union, the communist student front at the time. I assured Miss Birch that no "strike" or Student Union thought was in any of our minds. In the event, all of the Marcus ringleaders (including the now-distinguished concert pianist and music historian Charles Rosen) were expelled, except myself. The idea that the school rightist was a commie was unthinkable.

When I entered Columbia during World War II for college and graduate school, the universe of people I met expanded, but the political ambience remained the same. Everyone was either a communist or a social democrat, or a variety of each. The only other Republican student at Columbia was an English major, and so we had little in common, as I was increasingly steeped in economics, both for its own sake and because it seemed to me that the knottiest political problems and the strongest arguments for socialism and statism were economic, dwelling on the alleged failures of free-market capitalism. The more I engaged in debates and discussions with fellow students and professors, who were all some variety of leftist, the more conservative I became.

I was so far out of it politically on campus that sometimes I served as a kind of father-confessor. One time, someone I knew only slightly came to see me and poured out a tale of woe. (He was later to become a sociologist.) "Murray, you know I have been active in many liberal causes. Well, today, I was stunned, I don't know what to do. All my friends whom I thought were regular liberals came to me and invited me to join their cell of the Communist Party. I had no idea they were communists! What should I do? Should I join?"

What can you say to a mere acquaintance who spills out this kind of confession? I do not remember how I reacted, probably with some sort of cliché like "to thine own self be true" or "don't let anyone intimidate you." I never knew what he decided, but I am reasonably certain that he decided not to be sucked into the C.P.

During this period, I *knew* that there was a right-wing movement out there, but my knowledge was confined to such grand newspaper organs as the Hearst press, the marvelous *New York Sun*, and reports about Congress. For a while, after the war, I was perhaps the only New Yorker outside of libraries to subscribe to my favorite paper, the *Chicago Tribune*, which, in the grand old Colonel Robert McCormick era, was hard right throughout, not just in its editorial pages but in its reportorial staff as well. I had not yet, however, met any other rightist.

Finally, in 1946, I discovered the Old Right personally by finding the new Foundation for Economic Education (FEE) at Irvington-on-Hudson, New York, where I met the movement intellectuals and activists and was introduced to wonderful Old Right literature I had never heard of—libertarians Albert Jay Nock and H.L. Mencken, Frank Chodorov, John T. Flynn, and Garet Garrett—and all this very rapidly converted me from a free-market economist to a purist libertarian. This literature also converted me to hard-core isolationism in foreign policy. I had never really thought much about foreign policy, being steeped in economics, but now I realized that a noninterventionist foreign policy was part and parcel of a devotion to freedom and resistance to statism.

Libertarians in the post-World War II right naturally thought of themselves as "extreme right-wingers" amid the right-wing spectrum. There was no enmity between us and the less extreme or less pure; we were all happy to work together in the anti-New Deal cause: we were trying to get our less extreme allies to be more consistent; they were trying to get us to be more "pragmatic." Even in party politics, a purist libertarian like Congressman Howard Buffett (R-NE), whom I got to know personally, rose to become Senator Taft's Midwestern campaign manager at the ill-fated 1952 Republican Convention. I became a member of the Young Republican Club of New York in 1946 and wrote its policy paper blasting Harry Truman's price controls on meat, which he was forced to repeal during the 1946 campaign. I was astonished in later years to see "conservatives" hail Harry Truman as a model President: on the contrary, we opposed Truman hip and thigh, for his domestic statism as well as for his interventionist foreign policy. Indeed, one of my happiest political moments came when the Republican Party swept both Houses of Congress in the November 1946 elections on the slogan "controls, corruption, and communism." My first foray into print was a letter I sent to the Scripps Howard *New York World Telegram* celebrating the Republican victory, saying "Hallelujah!" and naively expecting the Republican Congress to promptly repeal the entire New Deal. Well they *said* they would, didn't they?

The first disillusion of many set in quickly. The National Association of Manufacturers, before that pledged to repeal the entire socialistic and pro-union Wagner Act, caved in, at their winter 1946 meeting, to the "responsible" corporate elements (read the "enlightened" Rockefeller-type forces) and changed their tune to call for what finally did occur: not repealing but *extending* the powers of the federal government to apply criteria of "fairness" to unions as well as employers. In short: to extend government power over labor relations instead of removing it completely. And with the NAM acquiescence, the Republicans, led by Senator Taft (a brilliant man but someone who was, disastrously, *philosophically*—and not just tactically—devoted to compromise), went along with this new sell-out position and passed the amending Taft-Hartley Act instead of abolishing the entire Wagner Act. Politically, repeal might have succeeded, since the public was fed up with unions and strikes in 1946, and they had, after all, elected a right-wing Republican Congress. Also in this 80th Congress, the Republicans largely abandoned their "isolationist," noninterventionist principles, led by their foreign affairs committee head, renegade isolationist Senator Arthur Vandenberg (R-MI), who managed to establish the first, disastrous "bipartisan foreign policy," i.e., glo-

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bal interventionism, in the post-World War II era.

Old Right Republicans, the soul of the party, always managed to lose the presidential nomination, perpetually stolen from them by the Eastern Establishment-Big Banker-Rockefeller wing of the party, who used their media clout, as well as hardball banker threats to call in the delegates' loans, to defeat majority sentiment in the party. In 1940, a Morgan bank blitz managed to steal the presidential nomination for the unknown utility magnate and leftist Republican Wendell Wilkie from Old Right isolationist Senator Taft and Tom Dewey, all his political life a Rockefeller stooge, who in 1940 followed what was then the isolationist Rockefeller line. In 1944, Dewey, now an internationalist following the Rockefellers' shift, won the Republican nomination. He was renominated in 1948, beating out the Old Right isolationist Senator John W. Bricker (R-OH) for the nomination, Bricker getting the consolation post of Vice President.

As far as I was concerned, Dewey's nomination completed the congressional sellout, and even though I was unhappy that Truman ran a demagogic leftist campaign against the 80th Congress, I could not bring myself to support Dewey. Hence, once again naively, I embraced the new states' rights or "Dixiecrat" ticket of Strom Thurmond for President and Fielding Wright of Mississippi for Vice President. I actually believed that the States' Rights Party would continue to become a major party and destroy what was then a one-party Democratic monopoly in the South. In that way, an Old Right, Midwestern Republican coalition with States' Rights Democrats could become the majority party!

At Columbia graduate school, I found a Students for Thurmond group. I showed up at the first meeting, which consisted of a group of Southern students and one New York Jew, myself. There were a brace of other New York Jews there, but *they* were all observers from the Henry Wallace Progressive Party, puzzled and anxious to find out to what extent fascism and the Ku Klux Klan had permeated the fair Columbia campus. They were especially bewildered when I got up at the meeting and made a fiery stump speech on behalf of states' rights and against centralized socialism. What was a nice Jewish boy doing in a place like this?

I have been asked many times whether the Old Right was rife with anti-Semitism. Left-wing undercover operators and smear artists such as "John Roy Carlson" had written a best-selling work, *Under Cover*, tarring all anti-New Dealers and America Firsters with the anti-Semitic and "neo-Nazi" brush, and the reputation of the Old Right has grown worse over the years, since, as usual, the interpretation of history has been solely in the hands of the internationalist winners.

The answer to this question, however, is a resounding No. In my decade on the Old Right, I never once encountered any anti-Semitic hostility. It is true that there were unfortunately very few Jews on the Old Right, but those that were there—notably the great libertarian Frank Chodorov—were widely admired and encountered no ethnic hostility. It is true that there was a general unhappiness with the fact that most Jews seemed to be leftists, as well as widespread opposition to the Zionist program of driving Palestinian Arabs out of their lands and homes, but these were attitudes that I myself fully shared.

The Old Right finally began to fade away over the issue of the Cold War. All Old Rightists were fervently anticommunist, knowing full well that the communists had played a leading role in the later years of the New Deal and in getting us into World War II. But we believed that the main threat was not the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, but socialism and collectivism here at home, a threat that would escalate if we engaged in still another Wilsonian-Rooseveltian global crusade, this time against the Soviet Union and its client states. Most Old Rightists, therefore, fervently opposed the Cold War, including the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, and the quasi-debacle of the Korean War. Indeed, while the entire left, with the exception of the Communist Party, got behind the Korean War as opposition to North Korean "aggression" under cover of the United Nations, the Old Right, particularly its hard-core members in the House of Representatives, led by the *Chicago Tribune*, opposed all these policies to the hilt. Howard Buffett, for example, was one of the major voices in Congress opposed to the Korean adventure.

By the mid-1950's, however, the Old Right began to fade away. Senator Taft was robbed of the Republican nomination in 1952 by a Rockefeller-Morgan Eastern banker cabal, using their control of respectable "Republican" media. In the early 1950's, Taft himself and the doughty Colonel McCormick passed away, and the veteran Old Right leaders faded from the scene. The last gasp of the Old Right in foreign policy was the defeat of the Bricker Amendment to the Constitution in 1954, an amendment that would have prevented international treaties from overriding American rights and powers. The amendment was sabotaged by the Eisenhower administration.

Finally, the Old Right was buried by the advent in late 1955 of the lively weekly *National Review*, a well-edited periodical that filled the ideological vacuum resulting from the deaths of McCormick and Taft and the retirement of other isolationist stalwarts. *National Review* set out successfully to transform the American right from an isolationist defender of the Old Republic to a global crusader against the Soviet Union and international communism. After *National Review* became established as the GHQ of the right, it proceeded to purge all right-wing factions that had previously lived and worked in harmony but now proved too isolationist or too unrespectable for the newly transformed Buckleyite right. These purges paved the way for later changes of line as well as future purges: of those who opposed anti-Stalinist, pro-welfare state liberals called "neoconservatives," as well as of those who persisted in opposing the crippling of property rights in the name of "civil" and other victimological "rights."

As time passed and Old Right heroes passed away and were forgotten, many of the right-wing rank-and-file, never long on historical memory, forgot and adapted their positions to the new dispensation. The last political manifestation of the Old Right was the third-party Andrews-Werdel ticket of 1956, which called for the repeal of the income tax and the rollback of the New Deal. Its foreign policy was the last breath of the pre-Cold War Old Right: advocating no foreign war, the Bricker Amendment, and the abolition of foreign aid. The betrayal of Senator Taft in 1952 had driven me out of the Republican Party, and after supporting the Andrews-Werdel ticket, I spent the following decades in the political wilderness, trying to join abortive third "Constitution" parties and to separate libertarians out from a right wing that I no longer recognized and that seemed to me far closer to the hated New Deal, domestic and foreign, than to its Old Right enemy, which I had happily discovered and embraced in the years just after World War II.

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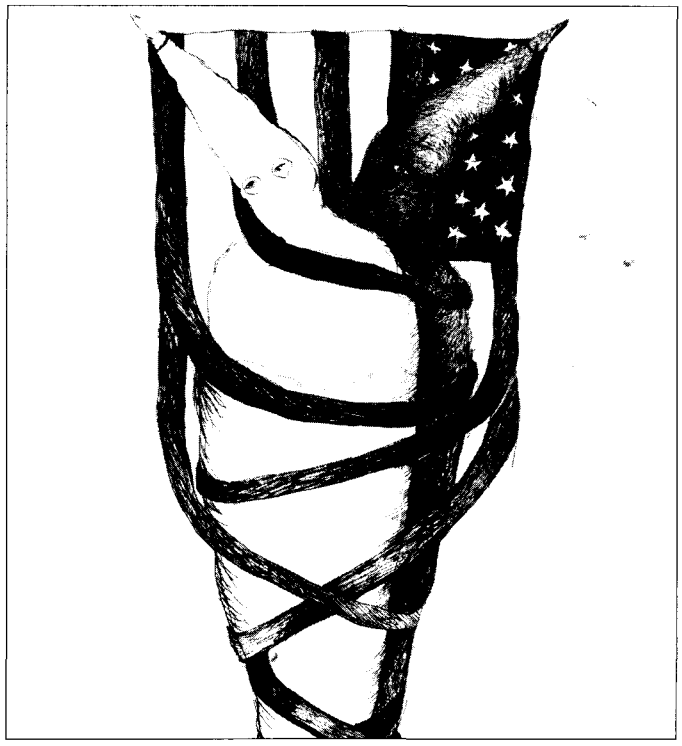
The Southern Tradition and the Black Experience

by Eugene D. Genovese



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

I am, to say the least, honored to receive your Richard Weaver Award and to be invited to share some thoughts with you tonight. Richard Weaver observed, in *Ideas Have Consequences*: "There is ground for declaring that modern man has become a moral idiot. . . . For four centuries every man has been not only his own priest but his own professor of ethics, and the consequence is an anarchy which threatens even that minimum of consensus of value necessary to the political state." Refusing to despair, Dr. Weaver fashioned his book as a weapon in a protracted war for spiritual renewal. Yet, reflecting on the ravages of what he called the "hysterical optimism" of modern man, he added, "Whether man any longer wants to live in society at all or is willing to accept an animal existence is a question that must be raised in all seriousness." With those words in mind, permit me some reflections on the deepening racial crisis in America and the constructive insights that may be brought to bear by the Southern conservative tradition for which Dr. Weaver spoke.

About 50 percent of black teenagers do not attend school, and the black unemployment rate runs several times higher than that for whites. Plausible analyses project a substantial majority of black males dead, on drugs, or in jail by the age of 25. Blacks may be pardoned for hyperbole in speaking of creeping genocide, for they are getting too close to the truth for comfort. Behind the statistics lie not merely the unemployed and underemployed, but a growing number of unemployables. We may reasonably counter the implicit threat to our society by invoking the harshest of measures to put down riots, uprisings, and frontal assaults on our persons, homes, and political institutions. For self-preservation is the foremost "right" of any people. But we cannot reasonably leave it at that. For in resorting to what may become necessary measures, we shall risk the repudiation of our Judeo-Christian heritage, the defilement of our national soul, and the shredding of the very free political institutions we are trying to preserve.

The "drug culture," the "crime in the streets," and the decline of "law and order," however much invoked as racist code words, gravely threaten all of us, especially the black people who constitute the principal victims. A debate on the left was recently opened by the Reverend Eugene Rivers, the black Pentecostal pastor of the Azusa Christian Community who has been leading the fight to restore civilized community life to the Dorchester ghetto outside Boston. His article in *Boston Review*, "On the Responsibility of the Intellectuals in the Age of Crack," has created a storm that is now spreading to other parts of the country. Mr. Rivers, politically a man of the left, has invoked what is generally perceived as a conservative theme and identified the root of the crisis as spiritual—as a catastrophic decline in Judeo-Christian moral values:

> As entry into the labor market is increasingly dependent on education and high skills, we will see, perhaps, for the first time in the history of the United States, a gen-

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eration of economically obsolete Americans.

But remarkably, the tragedy we face is still worse. Unlike many of our ancestors, who came out of slavery and entered this century with strong backs, discipline, a thirst for literacy, deep religious faith, and hope in the face of monumental adversity, we have produced "a generation [that does] not know the ways of the Lord"—a "new jack" generation, ill-equipped to secure gainful employment even as productive slaves.

We should not be surprised to find that Mr. Rivers' superb essay evokes some of the essential values associated with Richard Weaver and the luminaries of the Southern conservative tradition. For a substantial portion of black America has long adhered to those values, notwithstanding deep disagreements over the ensuing politics. Mr. Rivers believes that America, black and white, must adhere to the moral baseline provided by the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. And he insists that, so far as practicable in a world dominated by a global economy, political power must rest with the people of discrete communities, the historically evolved preferences and prejudices of which must be respected so long as they do not violate that moral baseline.

Thus he has forcefully opposed those who argue that the cultural war has already been lost and that attention should be turned elsewhere. He has replied that if the cultural war is lost, all will be lost. In response to Mr. Rivers' initiative, Glenn Loury, the "black conservative" economist, made a critical distinction between the market economy, which he supports, and the improper extension of a free-market ideology to society as a whole. And in truth, it is hard to believe that we could expect to live as civilized human beings in a society that makes consumer choice the arbiter of our moral and spiritual life. Thus from across the political spectrum we are hearing calls for a reexamination of the relation of religion to society and long overdue challenges to the monstrous mendacity that interprets the constitutional separation of church and state as justification for the suppression of religion in our schools and our political institutions.

Sadly, the primary obstacle to a critique of the relation of religion to American society arises within the mainstream churches themselves, significant sections of which have virtually repudiated the essentials of historic Christian doctrine and undermine their own institutional autonomy by submission to prevalent political ideology. It is therefore especially heartening that black clergymen are raising their voices against these perversions of doctrine and attendant political opportunism.

But we dare not mince words on the lamentable stance long taken by Southern conservatives on race relations. Tragically, Southern resistance to national consolidation and totalitarian tendencies, combined with a discretely admirable defense of community autonomy, has historically served as a rationale for the defense of slavery, racial segregation, and manifold injustices. Here the intellectuals and community leaders failed miserably. It would have been one thing if Southern conservatives had taken full account of the plainly irrational prejudices and vicious racial practices of their communities and worked calmly and steadily to bring their people to a higher standard of justice. Instead, they either fell silent or actually endorsed those prejudices and injustices.

Good Burkeans should not have to be told that an effective defense of historically evolved community prejudices and policies depends upon a willingness to effect needful reforms, especially in the face of blatant injustice. Those who today do not struggle against the enormity of racism in their own communities might at least spare us their whining when a federal government, with its own questionable and sometimes sinister agenda, imposes antidiscrimination measures from without. It serves no useful purpose to rail that consolidationist measures will, in the long run, do inestimable damage to black people as well as white. Black America is bleeding from every pore and can hardly be faulted if it gambles on a problematic federal intervention in the absence of effective alternatives.

At issue here is not this or that political or economic program, about which honorable men may disagree, but the context in which those battles are being fought out. Regardless of the political specifics, the American people, white as well as black, have poor prospects without that minimal moral consensus which Dr. Weaver insisted must rest on standards derived from the Judeo-Christian tradition and the piety inherent in what he called "the older religiousness of the South." And it is to that very piety which Mr. Rivers has appealed—as have countless unsung heroes in the ghettos, who selflessly struggle against a subculture of drugs, crime, and hopelessness.

Any effort by the black community to combat spiritual and social decay must depend upon its ability to impose considerable social discipline and to rein in antisocial elements.

There are, then, excellent prospects for a coalition across racial and inherited ideological lines to combat the moral degeneracy that now runs rampant throughout both white and black America. But the unspeakable misery that plagues black America cannot be cured by the resurrection of demonstrably inadequate integrationist formulas, whether of free-market, liberal, or socialistic varieties. So far, nothing has worked because, for different reasons, liberals, conservatives, and radicals alike obscure the essentials of the black experience in America. They all assimilate that experience to the experience of others—European and Asian immigrants, colonial peoples abroad, or the laboring classes in general. Yet its uniqueness emerges from the history of slavery and segregation, which confronted black people with a raw oppression and exploitation well beyond that experienced by European immigrants.

On this big subject permit me a few broad strokes. Other peoples contributed much to the development of an American national culture, but despite acute discrimination, they were not condemned as an inferior race, and they were able to progress and consolidate their gains through the steady accretion of political power. Not so for Africans and their descen-

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dants. Africans arrived with Europeans at the beginning of our history. Everything was done to separate them from their religions, languages, and general culture. Worse, unlike European immigrants, they were repeatedly driven backwards and prevented from consolidating political and economic gains. Yes, they were offered the Christian religion, the English language, and the Anglo-Saxon political tradition, but they were simultaneously barred from full participation as equals and told to accept their place as menials and as, at best, second-class citizens.

In the event, by forging a distinct Afro-American culture, which should not be confused with the manifestations of moral decadence now celebrated by a cynical academia and mass media, blacks survived the ordeal of slavery and segregation spiritually as well as physically. We need to understand the black experience as that of a people at once American and yet a people apart. Historically, it has been an experience that offers rational grounds for both integrationist and black-nationalist ideologies. For black people have constituted a nation-within-a-nation and have emerged as a people with—to borrow an expression from General de Gaulle—a "national personality" of their own.

I am suggesting that black people have good grounds for claiming a measure of autonomy to accommodate their simultaneous existence as Americans and as other. Emphatically, I am not suggesting that any other people can legitimately make such claims. To the contrary, nothing is more appalling than the current demagogy that proclaims the right of various ethnic groups to establish their own people's republic, with their own language and political principles.

All I ask is that whites of every political and ideological stripe consider the argument for a wide measure of black autonomy on its own merits. I do not much like self-quotation, but I shall ask your indulgence since I explored the political implications of this argument in my contribution to the debate in the left-wing *Boston Review* and do not wish to risk a shift in tone or content here. Thus I wrote:

> A government—any government—that cringes in the face of massive looting, rioting, and defiance of social order does not deserve to survive and probably will not long survive. If the American people are forced to choose between urban terrorism and authoritarian repression, it would be surprising if they did not choose the latter. And they would have every moral as well as political sanction for doing so. For if any "right" is well grounded in human nature, historical experience, and common sense, it is the right of self-preservation.
>
> The imposition of the law and order necessary for the survival of the black community cannot be effected from without. In a racist society such an imposition would take predictable forms with predictable results and would be bitterly and properly resisted. But precisely for this reason, black communities have good reason to demand considerable political autonomy and the power to deal with their antisocials in their own way. Community survival and healthy development require considerable discipline and, necessarily, considerable repression. The essential demand ought to be that these specific communities solve their own version of what is now a general problem for America in accordance with their own experience, traditions, and collective sense of imperatives. Must, for example, black communities, to say nothing of white, exclude the churches from their schools and affairs if they conclude that their inclusion and close cooperation with the polity are essential for the reestablishment of moral order? And if the churches, following scriptural and historical authority, declare homosexuality sinful and a threat to community reproduction, discipline, and good order, are they to be told that their autonomy stops there? On what grounds? What, exactly, is the "self-evident truth" at issue here? To whom is it self-evident?

Let me elaborate on those remarks here tonight, as I expect to do in further discussions in left-wing circles. Any effort by the black community to combat spiritual and social decay must depend upon its ability to impose considerable social discipline and to rein in antisocial elements. As Mr. Rivers has suggested, the struggle to restore a stable family life may well prove sine qua non, and, if so, the necessary measures may not comport well with the endless demands for individual rights and the arrogant pretensions to such newly invented constitutional protections as envisaged, for example, in the program of the gay and lesbian movement. Whites have no business telling black communities how to resolve these problems and would do well to keep their own preferences and prejudices to themselves. But to speak of "community" at all means to recognize as unavoidable the existence of prejudices, whether grounded in religion and historically developed sensibility or in response to an immediate threat to survival. Whites have a responsibility to support the efforts of black communities to solve all such problems in accordance with their own preferences and prejudices, so long as standards of common decency prevail.

When Lani Guinier tried to raise urgent questions about the distribution of political power, she in effect raised the very questions forcefully posed by the political theory of John C. Calhoun and his proslavery peers—most notably, the doctrine of concurrent majority. For in truth, racists or no, the Southern conservatives were the first to raise most of the burning questions in the early days of the Republic, and we have much to learn from their efforts. The question remains: Is it possible to separate the healthy core of that thought from the indefensible framework in which it was originally presented? I have no idea how Ms. Guinier would have responded to this challenge if she had been given her day in court. I do note, as no few others have, that the liberals who control the White House and Congress went to extraordinary lengths to suppress the issues.

We are indeed engaged in a cultural war today. To win that war will require a new and hitherto unimaginable coalition across political and racial lines. Richard Weaver's contributions to that effort, notwithstanding the political partisanship appropriate to his own day, remain indispensable. No less indispensable are the voices of a rising generation of blacks who have learned from the tragic history of their people the lessons that Southern whites have learned from theirs. The outcome of the cultural war will decide everything else of importance, and that outcome will depend upon our common willingness to overcome ancient hostilities and hear each other's voices. It would be astonishing if white and black voices rose together, across long-standing ideological divides, to show the way to victory. May we live to be astonished.

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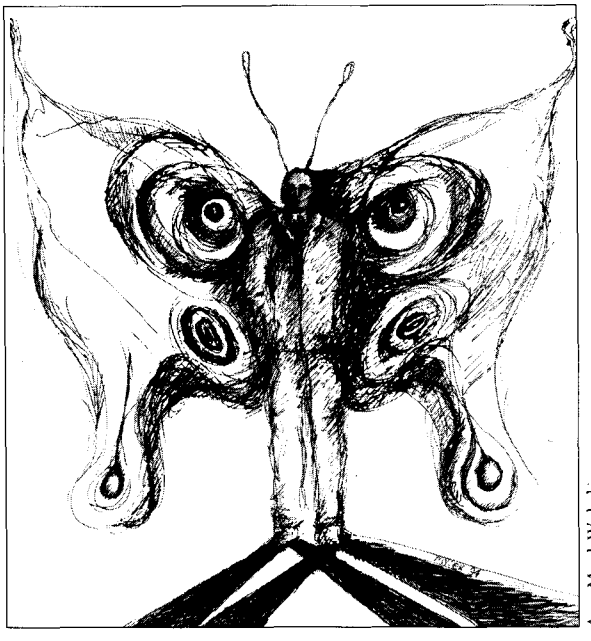
The Other Black History

The Past as Progress

by Joseph Brown



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

On May 13, Florida Governor Lawton Chiles signed into law a measure requiring public schools to teach black history. The black history law requires lessons on slavery, the passage of slaves to America, abolition, and the contributions of blacks to American society. "The history of African-Americans must not be minimized or trivialized," Chiles said. "The lessons of history should not be limited to one month or one day on the school-year calendar."

Like Governor Chiles, I agree that a people's history should not be limited to one month of the year, especially the shortest month of the year. But more important than the time constraints placed on the learning of black history is what kind of black history the state education department and local school boards will mandate. My concern is that black history is being taught from only one perspective: victimization.

Black History Month has become boring. Every year it follows the same predictable path: Martin Luther King, the civil rights movement, *Brown* v. *Board of Education*, segregation, and endless stories about the ordeal of slavery. This only helps to *promote* what Black History Month was supposed to eliminate: the myth that black Americans are historical victims of racism and have never contributed anything to the building of America except through slave labor. The spirit of self-reliance, an integral part of the black American heritage, is curiously given little time and space.

What I have come to call the "other black history" is being left out at a time when it is most needed. The truth is that values like self-help, strong families, religion, patriotism, and nonreliance on government are rooted in black history. These were the values that helped blacks survive, and in some cases prosper, through the worst oppression.

The black history that I learned while growing up in the 1950's and 60's conveyed that message. The two people most often mentioned then, Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver, epitomized the concept of self-help and overcame severe obstacles to make it in America. By the end of the 1960's, however, a move to draw attention away from these two heroes nearly succeeded. "They're the only ones we ever hear about" was the complaint then, and they are seldom, if ever, mentioned today during Black History Month. Considered the decade of great progress for black America, the 60's were also the beginning of black historical revisionism, which continues to this day.

Young blacks have long asked the same old question: "Why is his story [history taught from the Eurocentric perspective] history and my story [the black experience] mystery?" While the phrase is catchy, it does little to make young blacks feel better about themselves. If standard American history included the contributions of everyone who has helped to make this country great, there would be no need for a separate branch of American history, let alone the celebration of an entire month as a secular holiday.

Consequently, young blacks have become cultural schizophrenics: they are *in* the United States but do not feel a part of it. This is the residual effect of years of one-sided black history lessons and the rhetoric of victimization. This schizophrenia is manifested in criminal activity, drug abuse, poor performance in school, and a general feeling of alienation from the nation.

The other black history could change all of this. However, it must be taught year round and not just for 28 days in February. The recent celebration of one of my favorite stories in

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black history is a good example. On March 9 seven members of the Golden Thirteen returned to Great Lakes Naval Training Center just outside of Chicago to celebrate the 50th anniversary of their commissions. The reader will remember that, when World War II began, the U.S. Navy was like all branches of the military—segregated. Black Americans were relegated to jobs such as cooks and stewards. President Franklin Roosevelt, prodded by his wife Eleanor, challenged this racial policy. Reluctantly, the Navy selected some blacks for its officers' school at Great Lakes. They were segregated and given only eight weeks of training—half the normal period. They rightfully suspected that they were being set up for failure.

So how did they respond? Did they stage protests? No, they banded together as the Golden Thirteen, for the gold stripes they aspired to wear. When the nightly "lights out" order came, they covered their windows with blankets and continued studying. They tested each other. One was a lawyer who drilled everyone on Navy regulations, for example. They withstood the racism, in other words, and persevered through conditions that many young blacks today only read about and will never experience firsthand.

When the Golden Thirteen's tests were graded, their scores were so high that skeptical Navy officers ordered them retested. When they retook the "culturally biased" tests, the results were even higher, averaging 3.89 out of a possible 4.0—the best class score ever recorded there. They were commissioned as ensigns on March 17, 1944, and featured in *Life* magazine.

This is one of my favorite stories of the many that black history holds. It shows an ability not just to overcome racism but to triumph in the face of it. But if this story were told the way black history is taught today, the emphasis would be on the racism and segregation in the Armed Forces of that time instead of on the accomplishments of the black Americans who persevered in spite of it.

The victim-focused approach to black history has produced a victim identity among young blacks. This was very evident in a story told to me by Ezola Foster, president of Americans for Family Values (formerly Black Americans for Family Values) based in Venice, California. Foster was lecturing to a group of young, black, pregnant, unwed girls. They blamed their condition on the legacy of slavery, which "broke up" black families. They went on to describe the United States as a racist nation in which blacks have no hope of making it.

Foster scolded them and explained that out-of-wedlock parenting is a recent phenomenon in the black American experience. She told them how after emancipation family members would spend up to 20 years trying to find their lost parents, children, and siblings (this is believed to be one of the reasons that so many black children were given unique, exotic names—to make them easy to identify if a breakup should occur). She gave them statistics that showed how black Americans once had a higher rate of marriage than white Americans and how in years such as 1938 only eight percent of black children were born out of wedlock.

Then the cultural schizophrenia came out. Since the girls believed the United States to be such an oppressive place, Foster asked them where else they would want to live. Caught off guard by the question, there was momentary silence. Then one girl replied, "I'd like to live in Hawaii."

The other black history would have helped these young girls. For instance, the girls had surely heard of Rosa Parks, the brave black woman who refused on December 1, 1955, to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama, bus to a white person as was required by law. Her refusal started the Montgomery bus boycott, which in turn spurred the civil rights movement.

But if you know the other black history, it is clear that much more happened. Rosa Parks was not the first black woman who decided to resist the order to surrender her seat for a white person. According to Taylor Branch's *Parting the Waters*, in March of that same year, 1955, there was another woman, Claudette Colvin, who did the same thing. When Claudette Colvin was told to give up her seat, she responded with such profanity and vulgarity that it embarrassed the white *and* black people on the bus. She was arrested, like Rosa Parks was later in the year, but the difference is that Parks went to jail in the quiet protest that came to symbolize the civil rights movement.

The black leadership of Montgomery made a decision. They had been looking for an opportunity to challenge the oppressive regime in the city, but they decided that Claudette Colvin was the wrong symbol. Not only had she conducted herself in a manner that was unacceptable to them, she was also pregnant and unmarried. The Montgomery leaders, who wanted to start their protest from a moral high ground, did not want a vulgar-tongued, unmarried pregnant woman to be the symbol of their budding movement. They advised Claudette to pay her fine, because she did not represent the kind of person that the black community of Montgomery wanted to highlight.

Moral excellence, moral strength, and moral principles were once the foundation of black life in America. This is the black history that is seldom mentioned during Black History Month. If a girl got pregnant out of wedlock, her parents would send her somewhere where folks did not know her until she had the baby. That is the way it was. No girl could get away with blaming her pregnancy on the legacy of slavery.

Actually, blaming slavery for anything is only a recent method of excusing failure. In fact, when slavery was still legal, slaves did not use bondage as an excuse to be nonproductive. Black preachers never used slavery to justify negative behavior. Black leaders never used slavery as a rationale for immoral and antisocial behavior, even when slavery was a recent memory in the late 19th century.

The young black Americans who are so angry today are upset about things that happened to their ancestors, not to them. Young blacks today have never had to sit in the back of the bus. They have never been denied access to public accommodations because of their skin color. They have opportunities that their forebears never dreamed of attaining, but they are enslaved in a way that those who preceded them never were.

Imagine, if you can, that from the moment you were born all you heard—in church, from your "leaders," from the mindless garbage called rap music—is that America is racist toward your people, that people have it in for you, that no matter what you do they are going to stand in your way at every turn. That would certainly fill someone with a lot of rage if he were to believe it.

That is exactly what is happening to young blacks today. They do not know the other black history, which would put all of the rhetoric of victimization to rest. And as long as young blacks are made to believe that their shortcomings are solely the result of an ingrained racist predilection in American life that seeks to circumscribe their potential, the rage and the self-destruction that goes along with it will continue unabated.

Afrocentrism, the black American offshoot of multicultur-

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alism, has been prescribed as the answer to this lack of pride and self-esteem among young blacks. The theory is that once young blacks learn that they come from great, ancient civilizations, their self-esteem and behavior will improve. This is merely the latest in a series of gimmicks to get young blacks to feel better about themselves. Many Afrocentrists even argue that black children learn differently than white, Hispanic, or Asian children and that they therefore need a different kind of education. All of this is seriously flawed. Afrocentrism clearly promotes fantasies and takes liberties with the facts.

What is needed is not historical fairy tales about Africa but the other black history that took place here in America. The history of black Americans is a rich one that needs to be promoted as a past of perseverence and accomplishment, not one of sullen fatalism, which saps creative energy.

The best medium for conveying this is the black press. The black press used to be a lightning rod of correction to the black community. Black newspapers like the *Chicago Defender*, which I grew up reading, used to take a leadership role in the community. Now, the *Defender* and other black dailies, weeklies, and monthlies have little if any role in the shaping of values in the black community. Values have disappeared from their pages altogether and have been replaced by hype and entertainment.

One newspaper, the *Buffalo American*, long had at the head of its editorial column a behavioral guide entitled "Oath of Afro-American Youth." The oath began with "I will . . ." and included a pledge "never to bring disgrace to the race by deed or act." It went on to talk about respect for others, the community, the laws of the nation, and family. It urged people to forgo bitterness in the struggle for freedom.

Today, there are 214 newspapers and 64 magazines serving the black community. Nearly all are locked into a "white folks did it to me" mentality, forfeiting a greater role in the recovery of black dignity and ignoring the other black history. This is why the black news media must begin to reclaim the bully pulpit it once held. There must be more useful information and less of the "feel good" news, the endless rantings about racism and conspiracy theories, and the reporting on the square footage of some black celebrity's house. The black press is the best source for focusing on the other black history. It has the power to rebuild the moral fiber of the black community by letting it be known that the current chaos is just that—current—and not something that was always a part of our history. It must redraw the now-blurred line between right and wrong, recover the concept of morality, and reestablish it as a part of black culture. We always hear about the power of the media. Well, the black media can once again be powerful if it is willing to take a risk and buck the Establishment.

It is unusual for a group of people to have to go back in order to go forward, but that is the state of black America today. By focusing on the values that allowed us to survive through the worst of American oppression, the other black history can be a source of moral and spiritual rejuvenation for black America.

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The First Arkansas Bill

by Bill Kauffman

"The price of empire is America's soul and that price is too high."
—Senator J. William Fulbright, August 8, 1967

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

The oily whoremaster in the White House dodged the draft thanks to another Arkansas Oxonian named Bill, but the debt remains unpaid. For the shirker is viciously conventional, as the ambitious young always are, while his benefactor—Senator J. William Fulbright—is an 89-year-old man who bewails "how little criticism of the conventional wisdom is tolerated in this country."

A rich boy from a poor state, a bookish football hero, an Ozark Anglophile, Senator Fulbright operated outside the dismal confines of left and right. He was a Confederate anti-imperialist. A George Kennanite. The Prince of Fayetteville. A Southern Whig. And the most trenchant Senate critic of empire since Robert A. Taft departed this vale of tears.

I.F. Stone conferred upon Fulbright in 1966 the dubious title of "the most civilized and urbane man in the U.S. Senate." Fulbright was tough to peg, Stone wrote, "because he does not fit the easy stereotypes of American politics. He is not a rebel, a dissenter, a crusader, or a fighting liberal. He is not a liberal at all." In Britain this "well-educated young country squire of minor but inherited and ample wealth" would have been a respectable if maverick Tory.

Well, perhaps. The issue of another of Arkansas' great families, the agrarian aristocrat John Gould Fletcher, commended Fulbright for his "enlightened conservatism," which, when the light slants just right, blends into the poet's own "rebellious Americanism, my individualistic anarchism." Sweet dreams—and pariahs—are made of these.

Bill Fulbright was the golden boy of Fayetteville. Moody scion of the wealthiest family in town, he starred as halfback on the university's football team, won a Rhodes Scholarship, married a girl from Philadelphia's Main Line, earned a law degree at George Washington, and worked in a minor way for the New Deal-era Department of Justice before moving back to Arkansas to teach law and practice gentleman farming. Quite unexpectedly—and with his mother running interference—Fulbright acceded to the university's presidency in 1939 at the tender age of 34.

The green president jumped into extracurricular frays. An ardent warhawk, he denounced "the weasling, timid, and fearful policy of the isolationist senators." Fired the next year at the behest of a new governor, Fulbright ran for Congress in 1942 on the family money. Though he had never set foot in six of his Ozark district's ten counties, he won, and thus began a 30-year career representing a constituency he viewed as "self-reliant, industrious farmers and small businessmen."

Fulbright was an internationalist, as Oxonians are wont to be. He joined the Foreign Affairs Committee and gained early note as sponsor of a 1943 House resolution favoring American participation in whatever worldwide organization might emerge from what he queerly termed a "creative war." (The fabled Fulbright Resolution was so vague that even isolationist tackle Hamilton Fish, another football hero, voted for it.)

Fulbright rapidly became the pet Southerner of Eastern liberals. "This man is destined for greatness," Dorothy Thompson cooed. Fulbright's high-minded internationalism provoked Colonel Robert McCormick's *Chicago Tribune* to animadvert on the "first-termer from Arkansas, who in his formative years was sent as a Rhodes Scholar to Oxford to learn to betray his country and deprive it of its independence. In this instance, as no doubt in many others, Mr. Rhodes appears to have got his money's worth." It was a good decade for Anglophiles. In 1944, when Fulbright defeated Huey Long protegée Hattie Carraway for her Senate seat, so passionate was his Atlanticism that populist foes derided him as "British Billy" and "Lord Flushbottom."

Bill Kauffman is author of a novel, Every Man a King, *and a travel book,* Country Towns of New York.

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Young Fulbright was no heretic, though as a young senator he caught hell from Harry Truman when he mused aloud that because the GOP had captured both houses of Congress in the 1946 election, the President might want to appoint a distinguished Republican as Secretary of State and then resign. (There was no Vice President at the time.) Truman was not amused by British Billy's parliamentary daydreams. He called the freshman senator "an overeducated Oxford S.O.B." who would have been better off going to a good land-grant college (which in fact Arkansas was).

Fulbright hiked an unusual path, compiling a standard Southern Democrat voting record while making a reputation via highfalutin speeches. (This is not to give Fulbright—or any contemporary politician—credit for the style of his "writings," which are usually done by a factotum.) Like the Beats, he lamented the subtle strictures that were squeezing out free speech. In January 1955 he decried "the narrowing effect inherent in the concentration of managerial control of the press, the radio, the movies—and, in the foreseeable future, television. . . . People hear, see, watch, read, and listen to only one side of public questions. . . . The public man . . . may know the truth and want to speak it. Yet he doubts whether his views, as transmitted to his constituents by those who control communications channels, will be fairly presented, or presented at all."

This hymnodist of dissent had as yet done little of it himself. In foreign and defense matters Fulbright clove to the Cold War consensus, even urging the more sensible President Eisenhower to send ground troops to Indochina in 1954. Like other mid-century enthusiasts for a muscular presidency he called for "a more assertive exercise of executive power" in international affairs. "The consequences of our global interventionism were not a major concern for me in the 1950's," he later admitted. Then in 1959 he assumed chairmanship of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and the world turned.

To his great and everlasting credit, Fulbright recoiled at the adventurism of Democratic Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. Disturbed by the Bay of Pigs, distressed by the invasion of the Dominican Republic, the chairman at first played the good soldier with respect to Vietnam, shepherding through the fraudulent Gulf of Tonkin Resolution in 1964. But two years later, Fulbright had become the chief "nervous nellie" in Johnsonian demonology; meanwhile, Warren Hinckle in *Ramparts* was hailing him for sailing "in the mainstream of native American radicalism." He had broken, finally and fully, with the Democratic Vietnam War, and the series of hearings on American foreign policy that he chaired over the next lustrum legitimized the dissent whose praises he had sung so hollowly a decade before.

Fulbright was the first foreign relations chairman to defy a President of his own party since the great Spearless Leader of the Western Progressives, Idaho's William E. Borah, took on Coolidge over Silent Cal's gunboat diplomacy in Nicaragua. Borah and Fulbright both emphasized the paramountcy of domestic affairs. Empire, the Arkansawyer complained, forced us to "reverse the traditional order of our national priorities, relegating individual and community life to places on the scale below the enormously expensive military and space activities that constitute our program of national security."

Borah was a congenital dissident, a leader of the GOP's trans-Mississippi populist antipode. His defiance, while noble, was unsurprising. A better analogue to the Bourbon Fulbright was Massachusetts Senator George Hoar, a gentleman Republican who with bitter eloquence split with his friend William McKinley over the President's decision to suppress the Filipino independence movement.

At least George Hoar had company; the Anti-Imperialist League was chock-full of Mugwump Republicans. Fulbright's lonely apostasy came at a time when the same mind-our-own-business voices of Main Street had been silenced. Our two-for-the-price-of-one parties were monolithic in support of American Empire: the Western isolationists were all superannuated or dead, the Midwestern Republicans (with the shining exception of Iowa's H.R. Gross) had stolen the 1948 Democratic Party foreign policy platform, and the shrunken Henry Wallace peace wing of the Democracy was sponsoring "Ban the Bomb" rallies at which doe-eyed Laura Petries held hands and sang Negro spirituals.

Enter J. William Fulbright, quondam booster of "creative wars," now a Southern constitutionalist dove. The breed is rare, though the pedigree is honorable. The great Southern populists stood foursquare against war: Georgia's Tom Watson was a ferocious foe of the Spanish-American and First World Wars, and Louisiana's Huey Long promised to make the legendary Marine Corps Major General Smedley "War is a Racket" Butler his Secretary of (Anti)War. Yet with few exceptions the states' rights Democrats of the South—whose belief in limited constitutional government ought to have engendered a skepticism of empire—whooped it up for our frequent overseas interventions.

"No other section of the nation gave President Franklin D. Roosevelt such unified support in his efforts" to involve these United States in the Second World War, historian Wayne S. Cole writes of the South. The overwhelming support of Southern members of Congress saved such critical 1941 measures as the draft extension and the revision of the Neutrality Act. Only at the region's periphery—beyond Arkansas—did antiwar groups such as the America First Committee enjoy even meager support.

Something—Democratic Party loyalty, an inordinate enthusiasm for things military, the need to preserve foreign markets—kept even the wisest of Southern conservatives quiet. For example, Georgia Senator Richard Russell, chairman of the Armed Services Committee, was a thoughtful states' rights advocate who drily observed that "if it is easy for us to go anywhere and do anything, we will always be going someplace and doing something." Alas, like the Fulbright of 1955, Senator Russell never translated his sapient maxim into practical action. Harshly critical of our Vietnam War in private, he was the dutiful hawk in public, caught up in the idiotic delusion that politics stops at the water's edge.

Fulbright was a friend and admirer of Russell's, and though the Georgian was regarded as the apotheosis of the courtly Southern senator, Fulbright, in his own way, was an even truer son of the Old South. What liberals viewed as the wart on the great man's profile was in fact the source of his greatness.

Let's step back for a moment. Even at his career's apex, J. William Fulbright made a lousy saint. He took a states' rights position on integration and stuck to it, much to the discomfort of otherwise worshipful northerners. He signed the March 12, 1956, Southern Manifesto attacking the *Brown* v. *Board of Education* decision for its exercise of "naked judicial power," and unlike nimble opportunistic old segregationists like Strom

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Thurmond, Fulbright never recanted.

His obduracy consisted of equal parts expedience and principle. There was an element of cowardice in Fulbright's position; to have come out for the various civil rights measures would have been "political suicide," he said. And "I did not feel like giving up my career in politics because of it." This is a frank admission—of gutlessness. On the other hand, one finds in the Fulbright record residual Confederate resentment of Yankee meddlers. Looking back, he says of the Manifesto signatories, "There was a sense that we were the poor part of the country, that we had historic reasons to band together against northerners who were imposing on us."

For all his aristocratic suavity, Senator Fulbright was capable of regional defenses that have the populist flavor of a Pitchfork Ben Tillman. As he said in 1948:

> The people of the North are extremely solicitous of our welfare and progress. They assure us that if we will furnish better schools and abolish poll taxes and segregation that strife will cease and happiness reign. They are critical of our relative poverty, our industrial and social backwardness, and they are generous in their advice about our conduct. Their condescension in these matters is not appreciated . . . because these people . . . have for more than half a century done everything they could to retard the economic development of the South. It is no secret that the South was considered like a conquered territory after 1865. Since that time, the tariff policy and the freight rate structure were designed by the North to . . . keep [the South] in the status of a raw material producing colony. Above and beyond these direct restrictions, the most insidious of all, the most difficult to put your finger on, is the all-pervading influence of the great financial institutions and industrial monopolies.

This self-aware Southernness (which, despite James Carville's cosmetic magic, one *never* descries in Bill Clinton) was Fulbright's saving grace. His northern friends thought it his handicap, but in fact his anti-imperialism got its fillip from the South. "Small countries wish to find their own way, make their own mistakes," he said by way of explaining why our presence in Vietnam was unwise. So, too, for the South, whose autonomy and independence—even in the years 1861-1865—he always defended.

Revolted by the swollen, belligerent leviathan that was crushing the states' rights democracy in which he believed, J. William Fulbright emerged as a full-fledged Confederate anti-imperialist by 1966. He was never labeled as such, of course—it would have raised too many unsettling questions—but in his unread valedictory, 1989's *The Price of Empire*, the Senator explained himself: "Maybe I am the heir of the South with regard to the Civil War period. I may have absorbed an attitude towards big powers and big countries that has its roots in my Arkansas cultural background. You were not inclined, if you came from Arkansas in the years when I was growing up there, to be very arrogant. We were poorer than almost anyone else and there was a tendency to look down on Arkansas as backward and uneducated. It seems logical to me that this should have had an effect on my attitudes when I considered relationships between the United States and smaller, underdeveloped countries."

Given the cosmopolitan surroundings Fulbright chose from early adulthood—Oxford and Georgetown parties and all that rot—*only* his Arkansas roots immunized him against the disastrous "pay any price, bear any burden" globalist virus that was going around in enlightened Democratic circles.

The scariest thing about Bill Clinton is that despite all the "Man from Hope" balderdash his veins were long ago drained of Arkansas blood. There is nothing of the Confederate or rebel in this bootlicker. When the *Wall Street Journal* asked him, "What event before 1900 shaped your vision of American society? Your view of America's place in the world?" ahistorical Bill blithely answered, "None, because most of the things the U.S. did before 1900 were totally inconsistent with the global role I'd like us to play, or were narrow disputes over territory."

Where Bill Fulbright bemoaned "the loss of individuality" in an America that was becoming "shiny, sterile, anonymous and grimly, aggressively standardized," Bill Clinton is a Wal-Mart Democrat whose imperialism is of the Happy Face brand. Come, browse the aisles of his global marketplace, where the Little Rock shelf is identical to the Chicago shelf, which in turn is indistinguishable from the shelves of Brussels and Manila and Moscow.

Why Champ Clinton—whose trajectory from Hot Springs through Georgetown and Oxford and Yale to Washington is a lot like Fulbright's—seems bereft of even vestigial sympathy for smallness is an interesting question, one perhaps answered by the glimmer from Virginia Kelley's zircon-studded fist.

In contrast, Fulbright's Confederate anti-imperialism was fortified by the surety that comes from being the fair-haired son of the biggest family in a small city. One pictures young Billy as the Georgie Amberson Minafer of Fayetteville. "You'll never understand Bill until you realize what a secure basis he had," a friend told biographer Tristram Coffin. "The most important family in town. Never had to worry about money. Tremendous support from the family."

Fulbright fits into Kenneth Rexroth's pattern of patrician American dissent: "Most American families that go back to the early 19th century . . . have a sense of social and cultural rather than nationalist responsibility. The sense that the country is really theirs, really belongs to them, produces radical critics, rebels, reformers, eccentrics."

Looked at this way, it all falls into place. Fulbright's sense of responsibility was ultimately so strong that he broke loose of the shackling postwar conventions and drifted back, back, back into the glorious tradition of localist Southern dissent. If he never quite got around to prescribing "a wise and masterly inactivity" for Washington, as did Virginia's John Randolph, he did offer what he termed a conservative "defense of traditional values and protest against the radical departure from those values embodied in the idea of an imperial destiny for America." That his fellow conservatives vilified him for this only goes to show that empire blinds as well as bankrupts.

Fulbright's transformation ran counterclockwise. How many dreary tributes have been written to Arthur Vandenberg, the Republican senator from Michigan who shed his moderate isolationism and helped Harry Truman "scare hell out of the American people" as the premier Republican Cold Warrior? (Compare Vandenberg's press clippings from before and after his "conversion"; the wages of conformity are great indeed.)

By the late 60's, court journalists such as William S. White

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had caught on that "what the Fulbright people really represent is a new and embittered crypto pacifism-isolationism." This is overheated, but Fulbright did come tantalizingly close to advocating something like the paleo-isolationism he had fought two decades earlier. He was now saying that becoming a "global interventionist power" after World War II was "a mistaken ideal." He was weary of the best and brightest: "I think the world has endured about all it can of the crusades of high-minded men bent on the regeneration of the human race."

The whole Vietnam episode seemed to him a burlesque of misguided liberalism: "Lyndon Johnson, Hubert Humphrey, and others used to say that I was a racist, and that was why I didn't like the war in Vietnam. I didn't think 'the little brown people' were entitled to democracy. 'We want to bring them the Great Society,' Hubert would say. 'We're not racists. We have a great interest in those brown people.' And all the time bombing them from five miles up."

Fulbright, like most men who taste power, hung around too long. His reputation for aloofness grew—"no man, however strong, can serve ten years as schoolmaster, priest, or senator, and remain fit for anything else," said Henry Adams, who should know—and toothless populist Dale Bumpers routed his elder in the 1974 Democratic primary.

Though it cannot have been the critical factor, given the margin of defeat, outside money helped do in the senator. He had committed the capital crime of candor in 1973 when he told *Face the Nation* that when it comes to Middle East policy, "Israel controls the Senate" and "we should be more concerned about the United States' interests." The pro-Israel lobby directed its considerable energy into teaching Fulbright the cost of dissent.

The experience made Fulbright, in retirement, a sharp critic of "the subservience of our foreign policy to domestic lobbies," and he is not talking about the Burmese-American Friendship League. Liberated by age and irrelevance, and insisting that he is "pro-American" and not "anti-Israel," Fulbright declares, "We have lost our freedom of action in the Middle East and are committed to policies that promote neither our own national interest nor the cause of peace. AIPAC and its allied organizations have effective working control of Congress. They can elect or defeat nearly any congressman or senator that they wish."

This may be an overstatement, pace Charles Percy and Paul Findley, but President Clinton is unlikely to provide us with a test case. He pledged to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in March 1993 that our $5 billion annual subsidy of Israel and Egypt shall remain inviolate. Clinton's extremely tepid budget-cutters will swipe food from the mouths of destitute children before they will slice a sacred piece of the foreign apple pie.

Fulbright's row with the Israel lobby probably explains Bill Clinton's disregard of Arkansas' towering statesman. If the now-ailing Fulbright is half the man I think he is, he doesn't care. At an inauguration party, he told a *New York Times* reporter that the recent Arkansas governor who'd really impressed him was . . . the left-wing segregationist Orval Faubus.

Wendell Berry counsels:

> As soon as the generals and the politicos can predict the motions of your mind, lose it.

Senator Fulbright did. His detractors have said so for years. His admirers cherish him for the wisdom gained in loss. <c>

1-800

by R.S. Gwynn

Credit cards out, pencil and notepad handy,
  The insomniac sinks deeply in his chair,
Begging swift needles in his glass of brandy
  To knit once more the raveled sleeve of care,
As with control, remotely, in one hand he
  Summons bright visions from the midnight air:

The six-way drill! The eight-way folding ladder!
  Knives that pierce coins or thin-slice loaves of bread!
Devices that will make one's tummy flatter,
  Rout car thieves, and purge household taps of lead!
All made of stuff no earthly force can shatter!
  Their lauds ascend Olympus in his head.

And yet how little will his days be brightened
  By *Opera Favorites* or, if he feels lewd,
Even THE SWIMSUIT ISSUE. Briefly heightened,
  His hopes, ephemeral as stir-fried food,
Vanish like screws his six-way drill has tightened,
  Leaving him just like them—completely screwed.

"Buy houses and apartments with no money!
  Discover how today! Write this address!"
Snapping alert and clicking with his gun, he
  Draws a bead on the forehead of Success,
Whose orchid lei is fresh, whose teeth are sunny,
  Whose tapes will soon arrive via UPS.

But anger, with succeeding snifters, passes
  And soon all softens in an amber hue.
As through a pair of UV/blue-block glasses,
  Doubt fades before the testimony—true
Accounts of hair sprouting like jungle grasses!
  Of lifeless penises lifting anew!

Of bags and wrinkles blotted out! Of dumber
  Than average kids who, spared the wrath and rod,
Have learned to multiply! He fights off slumber
  The moment that his head begins to nod
And resolutely punches the first number
  Of what may be the area code of God.

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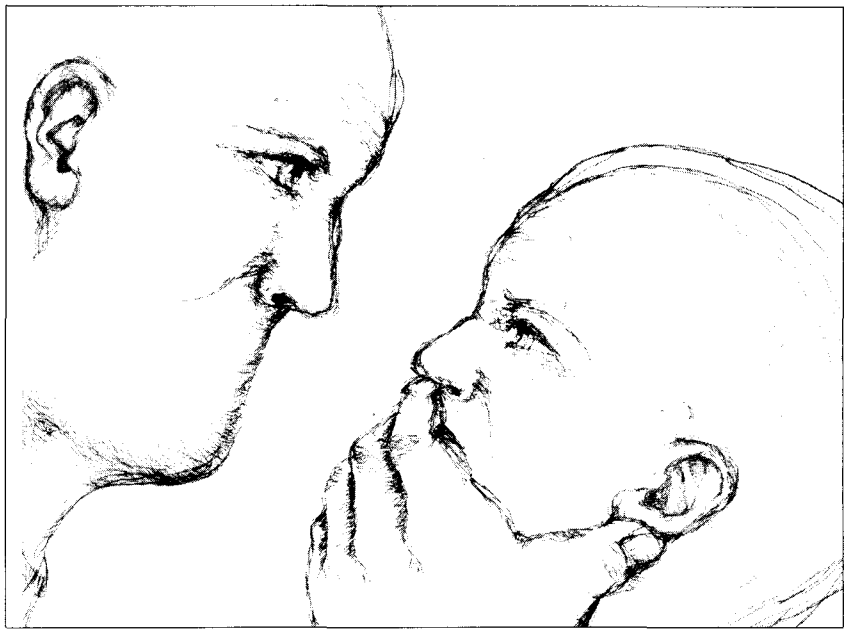
Free Speech or True Speech?

by Kenneth R. Craycraft, Jr.

"Prejudice renders a man's virtue his habit: and not a series of disconnected acts. Through just prejudice, his duty becomes a part of his nature."

—Edmund Burke



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

There's No Such Thing as Free Speech . . . and It's a Good Thing, Too
by Stanley Fish
New York: Oxford University Press; 332 pp., $25.00

◆

Few names are more notorious in the contemporary academic and culture wars than that of Stanley Fish. Among conservatives, he is mockingly dismissed as the representative of all that is evil in the modern university: a man for whom texts mean whatever the reader wants them to mean and who is hell-bent on destroying the canon of Western literature—and thus Western civilization itself. In most critical accounts, Fish is presented as either a sophistic buffoon or a cancer on the academy, and he has recently been portrayed as both in Dinesh D'Souza's *Illiberal Education*, a book that sets the context for several of the essays in *There's No Such Thing as Free Speech*.

But conservatives do themselves and Fish a great disservice by not attending to his real arguments, either to meet them when they are wrong, or, as is probably more often the case, to learn from them when they are right. Fish's challenges to some of the sacred tenets of conservative political and cultural theory are among the most powerful that have been made, and they must not be left unchallenged. For instance, his defense of affirmative action and minority set-aside programs in the university is among the most convincing I have read. For conservatives to meet his challenge, they must come up with new arguments, as he effectively disarms the usual ones by not pretending that affirmative action is not a type of discrimination.

But Fish is at his best, both philosophically and rhetorically, when he is attacking *liberalism*. And while his critique of conservative thought is strong, his critique of liberalism is devastating. The late Christopher Lasch was sometimes referred to as a conservative's favorite leftist. Stanley Fish ought to be considered not just a conservative's favorite deconstructionist (whatever that is), but as one of his most powerful *allies* in laying to waste the sacred cows of liberal political and moral theory.

It is first important to understand what these terms mean. Chapters three through seven of this collection of essays were written for a series of debates with D'Souza on university campuses after the publication of *Illiberal Education* a few years ago. And while the best essays of Fish's book come later, the debates with D'Souza set the proper context and give us a sense of how Fish understands his own cultural criticism. While common opinion would see these debates as Fish's critique of conservatism, it is actually D'Souza as a *liberal* that Fish attacks. Fish at times even sounds downright Burkean in his critique of D'Souza and others whom Fish calls

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"neoconservatives." In both his defense of literary (non)theory and his critique of liberal moral and political epistemology, Fish presents arguments that are not just friendly toward conservative thought, but are themselves expressions of the best of conservative reasoning.

Fish is perhaps best known as one of the founders of so-called "Reader Response Theory," usually caricatured as something like "texts have no inherently objective meaning and therefore mean whatever the reader wants them to mean." This is, of course, tantamount to saying that texts have no meaning at all, a blatantly nihilistic position that Fish is often accused of holding. But, as with any difficult and subtle theory, it is easier to dismiss a caricature than to engage the real thing. This is precisely Fish's charge against contemporary neoconservative liberals.

Fish's argument is not that texts have no meaning, but rather that the meaning of the text—any text—is necessarily shaped by the context of the author, as well as by the context of the reader. It makes no more sense to say that a text has a meaning apart from an interactive reader than it does to say that a falling tree makes a noise if there is no one or thing there to hear it. This is no more controversial a position than saying that no text is self-interpreting, a staple of, for instance, good Roman Catholic biblical hermeneutics. As Fish explains it, the author has explicit reasons for writing the text, but he is also molded and formed by practices and contexts that he has not chosen, which give his text meanings that are out of his control. The reader, in turn, is no less encumbered by reasons and practices, both known and unknown, as he reads the text. And it simply is not possible to deny that these practices and reasons (rather than some elusive universalist Reason) have some performative influence in the writing and the reading of the text. The ironic answer to his critics on the right is that for Fish a text may mean all sorts of things, but it can never simply mean whatever the reader wants it to mean. For this would imply that the reader is capable of abstracting both himself and the author of the text from the particular communities of which they are part.

Importantly, Fish sees this theory as a refutation not of conservatism, but of *liberalism*, which toils under the delusion that it has found some epistemologically privileged position from which it can find objective meaning in terms of a universalist rationality. This leads to a highly individualist account of reading a text, which assumes that any rational interpreter can find the "objective" meaning of the text on his own, apart from any interpretive tradition. While never denying that there is such a thing as "truth," Fish denies that any such privileged position is possible. Truth, whatever it is and whenever it is found, is necessarily found within some community of understanding.

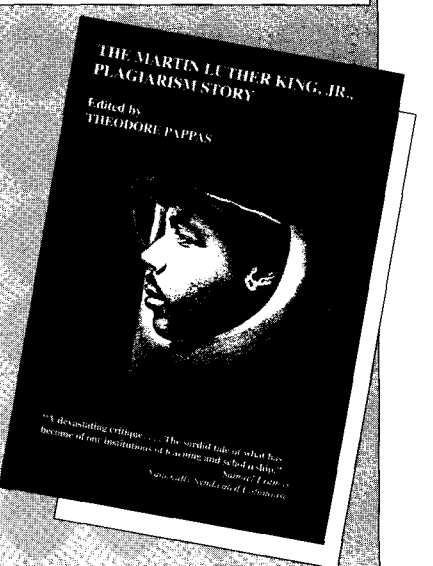
This argument is closely connected to Fish's more political critique of liberalism, which is presented in two key chapters: the title essay of the book and "Liberalism Doesn't Exist." Fish is most brilliant in giving lie to the claim that liberalism is a neutral set of procedures, rather than a substantive—and therefore exclusionary—account of the good. Precisely in denying the reality of public goods, liberalism has posited a public view of good and must therefore fashion its various moral and political institutions around that. Free speech, rather than being a procedural guarantee of access to the public arena, must be understood against the background of liberalism's substantive understanding of what does and does not constitute public good. Free speech is thus a substantive political expression of liberal ideology, which necessarily must exclude some speech-acts.

"I am not making a recommendation," explains Fish, "but declaring what I take to be an unavoidable truth. That truth is not that freedom of speech should be abridged but that freedom of speech is a conceptual impossibility because the condition of speech's being free in the first place is unrealizable." For the same reason that there is no epistemologically privileged position from which a text can be read and understood with perfect "objectivity," so no speaker may free himself from certain political and ideological boundaries that he has not chosen but cannot discard. The background of any "speech-act" is "not an object of [the speaker's] critical self-consciousness; rather, it constitutes the field in which consciousness occurs, and therefore the productions of consciousness, and specifically speech, will always be political (that is, angled) in ways the speaker cannot know." Like "text-creating," speech always happens in some kind of community and is therefore, at least to some degree, both constitutive of and shaped by that community.

Thus, commitment to free speech as a good in itself is inseparable from commitment to liberal ideology, even by those who would declaim that commitment. The liberal notion of free speech presupposes the radically individualist anthropology that characterizes the worst in liberal moral theory. Moreover, ideological commitment to free speech presupposes the very worst in liberal moral theory: radical moral relativism. This has important and perhaps ironic implications for conservative criticisms of campus speech codes. Conservatives have no interest in advocating abstract free speech on campus, because "free speech" is a liberal "truth-claim" at war with all other claims of truth and there-

THE MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., PLAGIARISM STORY

Edited by Theodore Pappas



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fore at war with all attempts to live truthful lives in some context other than liberalism.

Speech is necessarily a good only in the context of a particular, exclusionary community of value. "Free speech" is the expression of such an exclusionary community, one that denies the validity of hard contextual truth-claims. Indeed, "free speech" itself is a contextual truth-claim (which denies that it is so) that necessarily excludes competing truth-claims. On college campuses, free speech is the ideological weapon used to undermine the contextual practice of some other vision of truth. For conservatives to defend free speech as a good in itself is to defend a notion that undermines conservative commitments, practices, and truths. Conservatives ought not to appeal to a principle of free speech when liberals try to curb some speech, as this is an appeal to the idea that permits the sanction of speech in the first place.

Conservatives, by objecting to campus speech codes, use the same rhetoric and ideological commitments that justify them—commitments to some abstract notion of free speech, which in reality is a very concrete, contextual liberal political and moral good. The university can only be a place where truth is told and practiced. That truth may be "freedom of speech" or something else; it cannot be both. Conservatives ought to attack some speech codes, not in the name of some abstract idea of free speech, but rather in the name of some truth that such codes suppress. Obversely, conservatives ought to be at the forefront in advocating speech codes when the speech under sanction would undermine the truthful practices of the university community. A conservative understanding of freedom of speech realizes that freedom is at the service of, and thus delimited and defined by, some good that transcends it—namely some truth or compatible set of truths about God, man, the world, and politics. To be sure, free inquiry properly understood is a necessary element of finding truth. But listen to radical, leftist, deconstructionist Stanley Fish on this matter:

> The fact . . . that settled truths can always be upset, at least theoretically, does not mean that we cannot affirm and rely on truths that according to our present lights seem indisputable; rather, it means exactly the opposite: in the absence of absolute certainty of the kind that can only be provided by revelation (something I do not rule out but have not yet experienced), we must act on the basis of the certainty we have so far achieved. . . . When it happens that the present shape of truth is compelling beyond a reasonable doubt, it is our moral obligation to act on it and not defer action in the name of an interpretive future that may never arrive.

We do not abjure such truthful commitments in the name of free speech, as that would be to embrace another, contradictory claim of truth.

Conservatives should defend not free speech but a vision of true speech. In doing the former, they are mirroring *precisely* what liberalism does when it uses its notion of "free speech" as a trump to undermine competing truth-claims that it cannot otherwise refute. As Fish succinctly states the matter, "free speech principles don't exist except as a component in a bad argument in which such principles are invoked to mask motives that would not withstand close scrutiny."

To state the matter even more finely: there is no such thing as free speech, because liberalism doesn't exist. Fish takes on Stephen Carter, who has complained that he wants liberalism to "cherish" and to take seriously the religious beliefs that provide the "fundamental worldview" of most Americans. Carter thinks liberalism is a tolerant procedural system in which *all* worldviews are offered equal protection and respect. But Fish explains that liberalism can never take religion seriously, since liberalism is itself "informed by a faith" that rightly sees other faiths as hostile to itself. Liberalism may protect some kinds of religion within carefully constituted and defined boundaries; but to allow religion to escape those boundaries would be a threat to liberalism's own exclusionary agenda.

So long as religion remains compatible with liberal canons of reason, religion may enjoy relative tolerance. "The one thing liberalism cannot do," however, says Fish, "is put reason *inside* the battle where it would have to contend with other adjudicative principles and where it could not succeed merely by invoking itself," since its own legitimacy is what would be at issue. Liberal reason, no less than religious reason, ultimately rests on belief. And to allow religious reason to start asserting itself in the public arena is to allow the very beliefs that sustain liberalism to be threatened.

Carter's mistake is the common one of believing liberalism's most important assertion: that it is the worldview of tolerance and neutrality. "What liberalism does in the *guise* of devising structures that are neutral between contending agendas," Fish explains, "is to produce a structure that is far from neutral but then, by virtue of a political success, has claimed the right to think of itself as neutral." But "liberalism is tolerant only *within* the space demarcated by the operations of [liberal] reason; any one who steps outside that space will not be tolerated. . . . In this liberalism does not differ from fundamentalism." Liberalism must insist upon its view of reason as the only legitimate source of moral and political knowledge, else it would not be liberalism. Thus, Fish charges, against its most adamant assertions, "liberalism does not have at its center an adjudicative mechanism that stands apart from any particular moral and political agenda." Liberalism "*is* a very particular moral agenda," and its reasons and truth-claims are as embedded and exclusive as anyone else's. Liberalism cannot tolerate other moral agendas that contradict or exclude its own. By its own (impossible) criteria of what would constitute it, "one can only conclude, and conclude nonparadoxically, that liberalism doesn't exist."

To be sure, there is much with which to disagree in this wide-ranging and assertive book. Moreover, Fish can at times be as guilty of caricaturing his opponents as they are of caricaturing him. And I have barely scratched the surface of the breadth of topics this collection covers. The longest section is a brilliant analysis of various current legal theories, especially those having to do with originalism and other schools of constitutional interpretation. But for his critique of liberalism, including the liberalism that thrives under the title "conservatism," Stanley Fish offers a brilliant and unique book that must be taken seriously. In the current culture wars, the enemies of our enemies are our friends, no matter where we find them. *There's No Such Thing as Free Speech* is a devastating salvo against liberal intolerance, regardless of its guise.

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Talk of the Town

by Wayne Lutton

I Heard It Through the Grapevine: Rumor in African-American Culture
by Patricia A. Turner
Berkeley: University of California Press; 276 pp., $25.00

Many black Americans are convinced that they are the targets of a vast array of white-authored schemes designed to spike their food with contraceptives; force them to engage in self-destructive behavior, especially drug addiction; and kill them, to use their bodies for medical experiments or out of simple malice. In her new book *I Heard It Through the Grapevine*, Professor Patricia Turner of the University of California-Davis recounts some of the rumors circulating among blacks of these alleged conspiracies on the part of white Americans.

For example, Kool and Marlboro cigarettes, Coors beer, Tropical Fantasy (a soft drink), and Church's and Kentucky Fried Chicken are among the items widely believed to contain secret ingredients that sterilize black males. (The exploding urban black illegitimacy rate suggests that this campaign is not working.) Although there is no tasteless, odorless drug that can selectively sterilize blacks, so persistent are these "urban legends" that the Food and Drug Administration has been called in to conduct expensive tests of fried chicken and soft drinks. The Ku Klux Klan (sometimes in cooperation with South African interests) is believed to be the moving force behind the distribution of tainted food, as well as the maker of the popular athletic wear that urban blacks literally kill for. Adidas, Converse, Nike, and Reebok are among the businesses rumored to be owned by the Klan or by South African companies, or both. One company, which sold clothes under the Troop label, eventually went bankrupt after its brand name was said to stand for "To Rule Over Oppressed People," and the linings of its jackets and shoes were supposed to contain messages like "Thank you, nigger, for making us rich."

Professor Turner reports that many blacks are convinced that the federal government is harvesting them for use in medical research. As an instance of this she cites the string of 28 black children murdered in Atlanta between 1979 and 1981. Though Wayne Williams, a black homosexual record promoter, was convicted for the crimes, rumor persists that he was railroaded into prison and that the real culprit was the Atlanta-based federal Center for Disease Control, which supposedly used their bodies for cancer research or, alternatively, to extract a fluid found only in black testicles. While the government has, in effect, been subsidizing the black birthrate through various Great Society welfare programs, opinion polls indicate that more than half of all blacks are convinced that the government is likely involved in a number of genocidal plots directed against them. Chief among these are the proliferation of drugs throughout the inner cities, and—even more sinister—the introduction of the AIDS virus, believed to have been hatched in a government laboratory.

The author emphasizes that these tales are given credence by educated blacks, not just ghetto dwellers. Professor Turner relates that when she provided Believers with empirical evidence to the contrary, they accused her of being "taken in" by the White Power Structure. An aspect of this topic that Turner does not explore is what some of the consequences of this rumormongering may be for whites. If even college-educated blacks believe that whites are contaminating food and fostering genocidal programs, is it any wonder that black violence against whites is escalating?

Wayne Lutton is associate editor of The Social Contract *quarterly.*

New Right, New Wrong

by Paul Gottfried

Beyond the New Right: Markets, Government, and the Common Environment
by John Gray
New York: Routledge, Chapman & Hall; 195 pp., $34.50

John Gray's latest book, an anthology of essays, confronts unflinchingly the state of conservatism in the Anglo-American world. Resistant to the happy talk about a conservative renaissance in the 80's, Gray, a Whiggish Oxford don and a scholar of classical liberalism, stresses the ineffectiveness of the respectable right in both the United States and his own land. Though President Reagan and Prime Minister Thatcher accomplished fiscal trimming and administrative cuts, the managerial states in their countries did not change significantly as a result of their efforts. The administrative structure of these governments remained intact, and centralized control of what used to be called "civil society" continued to grow, after only minimal interruption. The therapeutic and victimological features of this control, which American paleoconservatives have rushed to expose, are not unrelated to the structural problems sketched by Gray: they represent merely a (perhaps Protestant) variation on a form of socially destructive management characteristic of the modern West. In America we celebrate this system as "liberal democracy," though it has little to do with either freedom or popular self-government, imposed upon us as it is in the interest of "values" and "sensitivity."

The strongest aspect of Gray's critique of the New Right, by which he means the Thatcher-Reagan brand of 1980's conservatism, also betrays, ironically, the weakness in his arguments. Gray charges the Thatcherites and Reaganites with having resorted to material factors in their attempts to explain human conduct, as if monetary and tax reforms could improve social relations and pub-

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lic virtue, as if a reduction in corporate and marginal tax rates could restore the work ethic and the integrity of the family. Despite this linkage, Gray notes, altered fiscal policies effected no important change in the moral climate of either Great Britain or the United States; those social goods the New Right attributed to capital accumulation and lower taxes stemmed rather from cultural and religious attitudes. One cannot recreate those attitudes, Gray insists, simply by putting a different spin on the economy.

It was the social morality, abetted by preexistent material conditions, of low-church Protestants that provided the major breakthrough in the British Industrial Revolution. But the Protestant spirit of individuality that contributed to a lawful society, as well as to economic growth, in 19th-century England will not likely be brought back by reprivatizing English industries or by lowering corporate taxes. The cultural and social context is no longer there; nor will the administrative state that has consolidated its power in the present century go away.

Indeed, Gray argues, the modern welfare state no longer controls even itself, having been invaded by the "neo-feudalites" long sponsored by that state. Civil service and public education unions have mobilized "victimized" minorities, and corporate lobbyists have occupied and colonized the still widely praised "democratic welfare state"; together they have created the "new Hobbesian dilemma," an anti-sovereign state that has become the battlefield in the war of all against all. Unlike Hobbes's Leviathan, which monopolizes violence for the sake of ending civil strife, the government described by Gray has neither stability nor authority: it is the state of nature misrepresented by its occupants as the pacification of strife. But as long as powerful interests, some protected by the national media, can benefit from using the state apparatus, they will continue to do so; and they will silence their opposition by applying a coercive administration against those they marginalize.

Gray maintains that we must take this historical situation for granted. For example, we cannot hope to return to the pre-welfare state, though it may be possible to fix, as Gray seeks to do, those functions the national government can effectively perform without being overly intrusive. Gray, moreover, believes that one can no longer halt multiculturalism in Great Britain, in view of the Third World immigration that has already taken place there. What a reformed welfare state might try to do, however, is support and nurture "real pluralism," i.e., the cultural life of transplanted Third World communities residing in its country; and while Gray shows unseemly enthusiasm for the cultural transformation of the old Protestant England that he obviously admires, his point nevertheless deserves attention. Perhaps in light of recent developments, there may no longer be a reasonable course for conservatives to follow, except to shore up the Third World communities in their midst. From a conservative perspective, it may be better to help Indian immigrants retain certain aspects of Hindu village life than to surrender them to feminist reeducators.

There are nonetheless two problems with Gray's position. One, he surrenders too much to the "given" historical situation, which it is possible to oppose even while recognizing. If the welfare state is indeed as oppressive and unjust as Gray asserts, how can its leaders be expected to adopt his suggested reforms? And if the "conservative" administrations of Reagan and Thatcher made so little headway against "big government," why should their governments bow to Gray's merely literary opposition? Certainly they have no interest in restoring families and upholding communities, as opposed to isolating individuals and redefining social identities. (Gray's proposed reforms remind one of the wistful lament "If only Hitler had been nice to the Jews!") Gray describes the American and British welfare states in even more caustic terms than do libertarians such as Lew Rockwell and Murray Rothbard, but then he turns around to suggest how the regimes might reform themselves in several steps.

Two, if culture really does drive politics and economies, as Gray intimates, what hope is there of restoring freedom in the multicultural states of England and America? It seems that multinationals, the managerial state, and public policy foundations have profoundly affected American culture and morality. They have certainly influenced our social attitudes, patterns of community, and sense of national purpose. Yet, if Gray is right—and I believe that he is at least partly correct—can English liberties flourish again among Hindus and Muslims, even among the members of those groups who have become British subjects? Gray rightly notes the historical moment at which liberal bourgeois societies developed, mostly in the Protestant West. More than other classical liberals of my acquaintance, he is aware of the historicity of the liberal heritage. Given the particular circumstances in which that heritage arose, he is properly contemptuous of the fiscal cure-alls by which the New Right seeks to resurrect it. (It is also possible, as he speculates, that the managerial state is itself the creator of some political liberty.) From its tolerance of administrative manipulation, one may conclude that our population has become hopelessly servile. Yet, do we improve the prospects of our own liberation by encouraging state-sponsored cultural pluralism? Will the further colonization of the West bring us back to something resembling Whiggish liberty—or will it take us even farther away from that goal?

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The People at War

by William R. Hawkins

A Democracy at War: America's Fight at Home and Abroad in World War II
by William L. O'Neill
New York: Free Press;
480 pp., $24.95

◆

"The wars of peoples will be more terrible than the wars of kings!" So predicted the young Winston Churchill as the new century dawned in 1901. The world wars (two hot, one cold) that have marked the decades since have validated Churchill while contradicting the glib predictions that "global democracy" would bring a new century of world peace.

This is not just a recent development. An enormous amount of social energy was unleashed during the rise of the nation-state, an energy that had carried Western civilization to its apex during Churchill's early days as an imperialist-adventurer. Regardless of whether a

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government was a monarchy or a republic or how extensive (or restricted) the constitutional franchise, popular support had long been necessary to mobilize the vast resources available in the modern era. That the Anglo-American democracies have been on the winning side in all of this century's world wars, thanks to strong leadership and energetic populations, demonstrates the enormous potential of popular government.

Rutgers history professor William L. O'Neill, in his 1986 book *American High: The Years of Confidence 1945-1960*, praised the World War II generation for infusing the country with "buoyant expectations and a rare sense of unity" during the presidency of a five-star general, Dwight D. Eisenhower, when the suburbs sprawled, living standards rose, babies boomed, the divorce rate fell, manners and morals were proper, the streets were safe, and the mail was delivered twice a day. Now, in *A Democracy at War*, O'Neill looks at the social impact of the war years that produced such a generation of vigorous, practical achievers.

The preexisting social environment was conducive to the formation of proper values. Early on, O'Neill offers a central part of his thesis when he writes, "America had great vitality. . . . Materially the United States was far and away the world's leading industrial nation." He continues:

> There were social and moral strengths as well, without which the physical assets alone would have been inadequate. Family life was solid and the basis of national might. The average years of schooling had been greatly extended, and literacy was widespread. To what now seems an amazing degree, Americans of many different ethnic backgrounds lived and worked together. People of all races and religions shared a common faith in hard work, individual obligation, and respected legitimate authority. The young Americans who were called upon to fight and die for their country had been raised to believe in it, to prize loyalty to neighborhood and nation, and to do what was asked of them. Consequently, the United States met the world crisis with a relatively homogenous, well-disciplined, and well-educated workforce, a huge industrial capacity, and a generation of young men who would prove to be excellent warriors.

It is standard practice to contrast democratic societies with totalitarian states, stressing what appears to be the superior ability of the latter to "command" major efforts. But a comparison of actual performance indicates that democracies are better equipped for the work. It is possible to stampede a herd of cattle, but their performance is not likely to match that of high-spirited thoroughbreds who enjoy the run.

Though congressmen were constantly afraid of provoking a revolt, American voters were actually willing to make greater sacrifices than their government demanded. Thus the politicians were often left behind as the public acted on its own initiative, setting up grass-roots organizations; volunteering as air raid wardens, home guards, and first aid workers; planting "victory gardens"; and pouring into the factories and recruiting offices. In Chicago, 23,000 block captains were sworn in during one mass ceremony. Shipyard workers in San Francisco offered to work Sundays for free. Farmers plowed their fields at night to put their crops in early. Wounded soldiers went to elaborate lengths to avoid the bureaucratic obstacles that got in the way of a speedy return to their units.

O'Neill faults the politicians for not making better use of popular enthusiasm, as in fact they had failed to do as early as the 1930's, when, in spite of polls indicating overwhelming support for increased conscription not only for military service but also to fill labor shortages in key industries, Congress failed to take this step. In 1943, the military stopped accepting volunteers, for the reason that the draft could better manage the flow of manpower. But draft levels were set too low to provide enough combat divisions to win the war earlier. The 1941 Victory Plan had called for 215 Army divisions, but the number was cut to 90 divisions in 1943. While this drop overstates the actual reduction in planned strength (American divisions with their attached support units were larger than enemy divisions and were kept closer to full strength), even before D-Day in 1944 the Army was running short of infantry. The United States put a smaller share of its population under arms and kept a larger share of its economy devoted to domestic consumption than did any of the other major combatants. O'Neill also deplores the discrimination against women and minorities, which limited their role to far less than they were willing to contribute.

The left did try to turn patriotic passions to partisan ends. They wanted a "people's war" in which citizens would exert themselves not merely for their country (a reactionary notion that leftists tried to link with the fascism being fought overseas) but for the personal gains promised by "progressive" reformers: direction of the economy by the government could be continued after the war to install socialism. Yet this effort, led by the *New Republic* and the *Nation* and by journalists such as I.F. Stone and Vice President Henry Wallace, failed because, as O'Neill notes, "it was the people who lacked interest in social revolution."

Though conservatives often trace today's bloated welfare state to the eras of the New Deal and World War II, in truth the great changes came in the late 1960's, not the mid-1940's. Government actions during both the Depression and the war were taken mainly within the traditional and legitimate framework of responses to emergency situations. It was not until the Great Society of Lyndon Johnson that massive government intervention was institutionalized on a permanent basis with domestic social programs outspending military and infrastructural programs. To go back to the 1940's would represent a shrinking of government far beyond what conservatives of the present day can even dream of effecting.

Today's problems are not the result of the generation that fought World War II but of those that came after it, growing up in a secure and affluent society they did not have to sacrifice to build. It is not mere coincidence that the "breakpoint" in American economic growth came in 1972, just after the baby-boomers had emerged from college with attitudes far different than those who had gone to college on the GI Bill. The "generation gap" was between the tempered steel of the World War II veterans and the soft plastic of the "Me" generation, best known for its constant agitation for rights and its constant shirking of duties.

As the baby-boom generation reaches middle age, it has taken a sufficient measure of reality to understand the need to

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recreate the familial and national values it scorned in its youth. But the social order cannot be restored by an abstract discussion of "values," whose essential contribution to human existence needs to be demonstrated. The value of Professor O'Neill's book is that it provides just such a demonstration.

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Still Storied

by J.O. Tate

That's What I Like (About the South): And Other New Southern Stories for the Nineties
Edited by George P. Garrett and Paul Ruffin
Columbia: University of South Carolina Press; 421 pp., $34.95

◆

As traditional as a Chinese restaurant, as homegrown as a Subaru, as agrarian as a fax machine, as Celtic as a computer, as handcrafted as cable television, as hospitable as an eight-lane expressway, as Baptist as a drug deal, as Presbyterian as neo-pagan worship, as Episcopalian as a lesbian sermonette, and as pious as an abortion mill, the contemporary South is an overheated but air-conditioned land of profound corruption, Swedish luxury sedans, and political fatuity that exemplifies everything wrong with America. Why else would a small-town boy from Arkansas, raised on wholesome values, fit in so well with the high-minded leaders of New York, Hollywood, and Haiti?

But beneath the surface of ugliness, lies, and conformity, there remains a remnant of authenticity that may be isolated privately or even demonstrated publicly. In the realm of literary culture, the short story, since Poe and Longstreet and Thorpe, has been a Southern specialty of international renown. In our century, names such as William Faulkner, Katherine Anne Porter, Caroline Gordon, Eudora Welty, Robert Penn Warren, Andrew Lytle, Flannery O'Connor, and Peter Taylor come to mind first perhaps, but the import of the present volume is that the literary tradition of the South remains a vital one, even in the shadows of those masters and mistresses of the art.

Readers of this journal will be interested to know that two pieces originally published in *Chronicles* in March 1991—Fred Chappell's story "Ancestors" and Madison Smartt Bell's essay "Time and Tide in the Southern Short Story"—are included here. They are joined by a number of stories from a special 1990 issue of *Texas Quarterly*, as well as by others from elsewhere—31 in all. The collection is imposing, "diverse," and impressive, striking sparks in many directions, though I will restrict myself here to commenting upon only a few of them. After all, Fred Chappell's introduction, "The Good Songs Behind Us: Southern Fiction of the 1990's," says what needs to be said so effectively that further comment is hardly necessary.

Still, I would like to note a few works that seem particularly remarkable, ones which are likely to survive the publication even of *That's What I Like* to become set pieces in writing classes and to be featured in subsequent anthologies of the short story. Furthermore, these stories show in various ways something distinctively Southern that survives in spite or even because of so many changes. Fred Chappell's "Ancestors," quite possibly the finest work in this collection, might be called an example of "magic realism" or of Confederate science fiction. In giving a new meaning to the phrase "opening old wounds," he provides a perspective upon the past by vividly imagining a future in which that past is not only not forgotten, but possibly even revised, as the Civil War eternally returns. That war is present also as an ironically baleful background in Alison Hagy's "The Field of Lost Shoes," in which the battlefield of New Market provides a contemporary setting for the crisis of a love affair.

Or perhaps Madison Jones's "Rage" is the finest work in this collection. At the end, Herman, the black protagonist, "looked . . . like the devil himself," a phrase that hints at a larger meaning about the nature of rage. Madison Jones's story is notable for its disarming purity of diction and for a moral awareness reminiscent of those honorary Southerners, Hawthorne and James—qualities we have come to expect from one of our nation's finest writers. "Rage" is notable, too, as a story about a black man written by a white man—a story as politically incorrect as it is morally sound.

But then again, something very different, Jill McCorkle's "Final Vinyl Days," is also a contender as a favorite, making meaning as it does from the chaos of mass culture. Its narrator is agonized by progress, for what compact disc has the authenticity of an LP of oldies but goodies? Love is as hard to find as the good old days of the late 60's and early 70's: "Where were the *real* women? Where was Grace Slick?" The Southern longing for days gone by has rarely been so poignantly parodied as in this sad and funny story.

R.H.W. Dillard's contribution (which lends its title to that of this collection) is something else, a postmodern send-up that makes one think of Borges and Nabokov and Berger before reflecting that Faulkner is here, too, as everywhere. Trying to get the "gender" of Roy and Shirley, respectively, and to count all the titles of Southern works woven into the text of "That's What I Like (About the South)" is so much fun that reading, yet once more, feels good.

The pleasure of the text is not *Schadenfreud*, though, even when stories written from the realist tradition put us through compelling unpleasantness. William Mills' "The Commuters" is a glimpse of hell that seems frighteningly like familiar experience. The severity of its truth gives us an existential insight as well as the satisfaction of knowing something that is keenly rendered. Clay Reynolds' "Mexico" does scrupulously and powerfully just what the movies can't do at all, in a tale of roughneck violence that produces an epiphany. Alan Weir's "Bastard" is a superb story of highly particular recollection, of a coming of age understood in hindsight and made accessible by the telling.

So much success and so much variety are self-recommending to any reader hungry for the good stuff; and I have cited only a few of many pieces. The demonstrated craftsmanship says much about the possibilities of writing in and about and of the South, which somehow retains a cultural identity even as it is betrayed from within and transformed from without. The reading, like the writing, helps. So what else is new?

J.O. Tate is a professor of English at Dowling College on Long Island.

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Wiring to the Future

by Gregory McNamee

News Over the Wires
by Menahem Blondheim
Cambridge: Harvard University Press;
305 pp., $39.95

The current debate over the so-called cyberstream, the data highway that futurists promise will lead us to a techno-utopia, has many people bewildered, so dense is it with rhetoric and empty assertion. This is not surprising: most of the debate is filled by boosters of gadgetry on the one hand, by neo-Luddites on the other. Neither side has quite figured out the real, beneficial uses of a broadened information network (they are many, although the vaunted 500 TV channels of times to come are not among them), and neither has identified some of the real problems associated with a nation of computer-monitor zombies.

Ecclesiastes has already reminded us that there is nothing new under the sun, and our culture's headlong disappearance into the data vortex is no exception. In his thorough study *News Over the Wires*, the Israeli social historian Menahem Blondheim brings to life the swirl of debate over a similar technological transformation that took place in America a century before the present era of innovation and upheaval. Charting the growth of the telegraph industry and its effect on the course of public information from 1844 to 1897, Blondheim offers a cautionary tale of the media's power to sanitize political discourse, heighten tensions between contending groups, and serve itself before the common good. Students of the current electronic *mélee* would do well to read his findings.

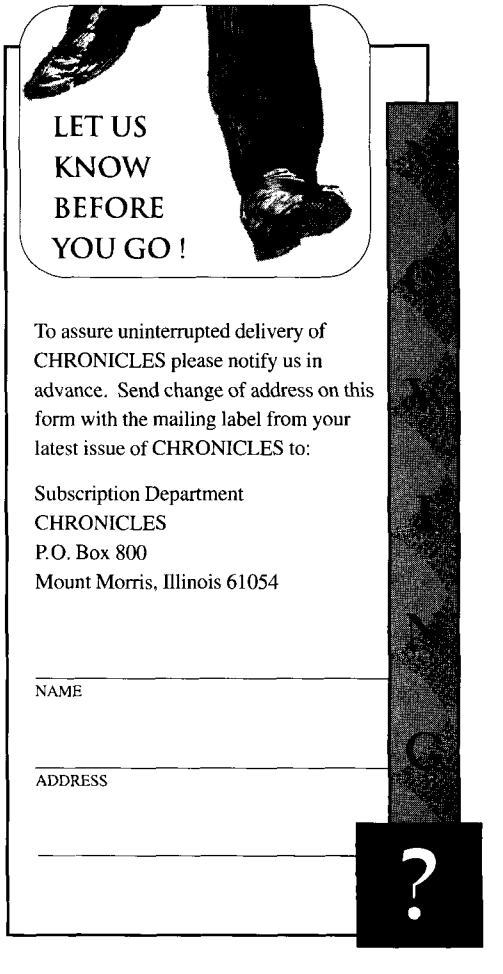
In 1790, Blondheim notes, the average interval between an event's occurrence in Washington and its reportage in Boston was an astonishing 18 days: but these were times, he goes on to note, when a newspaper editor could close an issue by writing, "We stop the press to announce that there is no news, and no more expected," when a slow period meant that an urban weekly could simply skip an issue without anyone blinking. (Even late in the 19th century, papers short on news were filled by happy custom with biblical passages, noteworthy speeches, and homilies. Papers today are just as short on real news, but filled out with display advertising, stock reports, gossip, and comics.) Contemporary readers and editors alike were less sure than we that some big event might break at any moment, and the early years of the Republic had a decidedly unfrantic cast.

By the 1840's, however, telegraph wires had been strung over much of the Eastern seaboard, whence they soon radiated into the American interior. Their initial use was commercial, largely to enable merchants to report the arrival of expected shipments into port and to secure orders for newly debarked goods. Somewhere along the line New York's growing daily newspapers realized that the telegraph could be put to their uses as well, ushering into journalistic history the notion of the scoop. "News reporters," Blondheim writes, "appeared in the telegraph offices hours or even days in advance of anticipated information, equipped with the Good Book, and had the obliging operator commence all their messages with 'In the beginning. . . .' [An editor] testified that occasionally the operator approached the end of Deuteronomy before he was presented with newsier text for transmission." Monopolizing the wires may have been *infra dig* by some lights, but journalists and telegraphers alike soon realized that theirs was an inevitable partnership. In 1846 elements from both camps merged to form the New York Associated Press, an agency that, like the Associated Press of today, issued releases in "journalese" (a simplified, formulaic language made standard for the telegrapher's convenience).

Blondheim excavates a few wonderful stories in connection with the AP's growth. One involves a mysterious young woman who wandered into a telegraph office, sent a message to Baltimore, and disappeared into the streets of New York after receiving a reply. Afterward someone cut the wires between the two cities. Some months later the woman reappeared, with the same results. The AP editors may have been without their customary news for a short time, but their wallets thickened all the same: Blondheim speculates that they were using their virtual monopoly to speculate on the commodities market, cutting their own wires to deny other parties the latest shipping news. He is just as good in his account of the arduous race to lay a trans-Atlantic telegraph cable in mid-century, offering the interesting tidbit that in 1866 each word wired from London to New York cost a staggering five dollars in gold.

Karl Marx likely had the telegraph in mind when he penned one of his few lovely phrases, "All that is solid melts into air." The data highway of today takes us further into the ethereal. For that reason, I wish that Blondheim had taken a bit more leisure to examine the parallels between the period of his study and the present, or at least the technological transformations of American society after World War II. A more broadly comparative view would have brought *News Over the Wires* a wider readership. As it is, tucked inside the series Harvard Studies in Business History, it may be ignored. That would be a shame, for this is a good, provocative book that has bearing on more than one unsettled time.

Gregory McNamee's most recent book is Gila: The Life and Death of an American River *(Crown Publishers).*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Letter From Italy

by Thomas Fleming

The Italian Revolution

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The more I learn of Italy, the less I know. Several years ago I thought I understood the essentials of the Italian political scene, that I was a Tocqueville in reverse. But ignorance was Tocqueville's great advantage, too, and it is always easier to make out the forest when you are willing to ignore the trees.

If the March elections seem confusing from the distance of 5,000 miles, they are even more confusing viewed from close up, even when the viewers are Italians. For one thing, most of the major players and even the parties are newcomers. Tell me where and in what country is the photogenic Claudio Martelli, where are Giulio Andreotti and Bettino Craxi, Cossiga and De Michelis? *Mais où sont les neiges d'antan*?

The one real veteran is Achille Occhetto, the communist who changed the name of his party. Not so long ago, political analysts were already arguing over the composition of Occhetto's cabinet. His success, after recent victories in local elections, was a foregone conclusion. For years, the communists had represented themselves as the honest party, aloof from the corrupt *partitocrazia* that worked hand-in-glove with big business and the Mafia. Now that the Cold War is ended and the United States does not worry about a communist takeover; now that the CIA no longer seemed to be funneling money to the ruling parties, the long-deferred communist victory was just around the corner.

For many Italian intellectuals, the main problem with the communists was that they were not hard-core enough, but in the past several years, evidence had been accumulating of communist complicity with the system: bribery, although not on the luxurious scale enjoyed by the Socialists and the Christian Democrats; timidity and reluctance to consider the sweeping reforms advocated by the Lega Nord and the neofascist Movimento Sociale Italiano (MSI); and, worst of all, the no-longer-secret support the communists had received from the Soviets.

Over dinner, one of Italy's leading humanists confesses that, although he had voted for the left—usually the communists—all his life, this time around he supported the Forza Italia, voting in fact for Gianfranco Fini, the leader of the MSI. "I thought the communists were honest, because they did not take bribes from Italian business. Now I realize they were bribed by the enemies of our country. Better to take money from Italians." In a television debate, Gad Lerner asks if Occhetto, the man of the opposition, hasn't changed roles with Silvio Berlusconi, an establishment businessman closely connected with the four-party alliance that formed the government. Unfortunately for Occhetto, there is no good answer to the question.

Berlusconi is the leader of Forza Italia—a name that suggests that Italy is more a soccer team than a sovereign nation. A one-time friend and supporter of Bettino Craxi, Berlusconi has seen the light, and his lighter speeches read like the editorial page of the *Wall Street Journal*. The credit for his conversion to neoclassical liberalism goes to Antonio Martino, a rare free-marketeer in a country whose economics range from communitarian to collectivist.

Martino favors privatization of the great state-owned enterprises, while the Lega has emphasized devolution, a process of returning economic power to local government. Many *leghisti* are skeptical of privatization schemes, which in the past have changed very little, since the ex-bureaucrats are guaranteed seats on the boards of directors. Catholic rightists, on the other hand, without necessarily favoring a collectivist economy, are suspicious of plans that strengthen an irresponsible capitalist class and, worse, put the nation's resources in the hands of stockjobbers and foreigners: one great electricity cooperative is now owned by the Japanese.

The Italian political crisis is, in fact, rooted in economic problems—stagnant wages, faltering productivity, and a plummeting lira that is attracting hordes of tourists looking for a vacation on the cheap. Hotel prices have risen but not enough to offset the fact that 100,000 lire, which used to be worth almost $90 two years ago, is more like $60 this spring. The *tangenti* scandal might have been blown off in a boom time. Italians would have shrugged their shoulders and said, "Everybody cheats." But as taxes rose higher and higher, the response to each new prosecution became: "No wonder they need to raise taxes—more money to steal." In this climate of opinion, Berlusconi's promise to deliver 100,000 new jobs was greeted not with the cynicism that it deserved but as a life-preserver dangled over the head of a drowning man.

A major theme of Forza Italia's campaign was their endorsement of a strong presidency, an idea that has been advocated by many political leaders, including the past president of the republic, Francesco Cossiga. The plan offered by Forza Italia calls for "the election by direct national suffrage of the President of the Republic" to a five-year term, and the hope is that a strong president would unify the warring factions, classes, and regions of divided Italy.

Lurking beneath the discussion of presidentialism is nostalgia for strong leaders who have always stirred the Italian imagination: gangsters like Julius Caesar, thugs like Francesco Sforza, popinjays like D'Annunzio. Medieval Italy was a land of small republics, but as the Middle Ages waned into the Renaissance, those republics fell under the sway of some *miles gloriosus*: Castruccio Castricane in Lucca, Cesare Borgia in the Papal States, the Medici in Florence—all of whom were admired by Machiavelli.

Some of them were genuinely great men: in the 15th century Duke Federigo da Montefeltro turned little Urbino into one of the creative centers of the Renaissance, and the modern city, beautifully preserved by leftist local governments, retains his imprint. They were great men, without being good in any conventional sense, but their job, as Machiavelli saw it, was to bring results: peace, stability, wealth, and if Bill Clinton could achieve any of these, he would find only Republicans to criticize his reign. When Caesar falls on his face, the

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mob will string him up, but when Caesar conquers the world, it requires Cato's virtues to oppose the gods. Man is born servile, and liberty of any sort requires constant vigilance. Leave him alone for a few minutes and you will find him fashioning a golden calf to worship, and if he lacks gold, as we Americans do, then he will be content with monkey metal. *Aut Caesar aut Clinton.*

The Italians have higher standards, and Mussolini himself seems like a giant, when compared with Franklin Roosevelt and his successors. Italy is the land of the superman, where even artists and intellectuals have been men: just compare Dante with Chaucer, Machiavelli with Locke, Leonardo with virtually any non-Italian painter, D'Annunzio with Oscar Wilde. Nietzsche, when he saw the portrait of Andrea Doria in Genova, declared that he had laid eyes upon the Superman. There is no irony here, since the wish of every sane Northern European is to be Italian. In this light, the worst thing the Italians could have done was to overturn the monarchy, as they did on a narrow plebiscite after the last war, and Denis Mack Smith (the British historian of modern Italy) recently endorsed presidentialism as a domesticated substitute for the House of Savoy.

Many Italians are sold on presidentialism as the cure for instability; however, the one party to campaign on a platform of national revival was the Alleanza Nazionale, whose nucleus is the neofascist MSI. The Italian press, it hardly needs saying, went into hysterics over the participation of neofascists (Gianfranco Fini prefers the term "post-fascist"). The entire postwar Italian regime is built upon antifascism, which, like American equality, gets reinterpreted every 10 years to mean support for women's rights, open immigration, radical environmentalism, and criminal pathology. The growing acceptability of the MSI is a good indication that the postwar regime really is cracking up. To understand what is happening, try to imagine an unrepentant David Duke in the next Republican Cabinet—Fini still regards il Duce as the greatest man of the century.

Gianfranco Fini proved to play very well on television, and in the period before and after the elections he distinguished himself by his self-effacing loyalty to the coalition—above all to Berlusconi. The Lega Nord took the opposite tack, warning its partners that the Lega had two barrels to its gun, one for the "progressives" and another in reserve for Berlusconi himself. Umberto Bossi, throughout the campaign, seemed to be running as much against as with the partners of the coalition. The reaction in the press and on the Italian right was predictable: madman, a clown, out of control.

It is often emphasized that Bossi hails from Varese, the point of which I never understood, until, driving out of Milano, we were almost wiped out by an incompetent driver insouciantly weaving in and out of traffic. "He drives like he's from Varese," observed my young friend Marco Respinti. Unstable, erratic, provincial—that is the view of Bossi taken by serious-minded Italians. A very wise friend of mine, with a blind spot where the Lega is concerned, told me that this time Bossi had gone too far. A prudent man would have known how to distinguish between electoral support that is firm and that which is merely given in protest. The Lega's failure to improve its position in this election, he explained, is a harbinger of its eventual marginalization.

Perhaps. Then again, I have heard this talk every year for four years, and yet it is only now that Senator Bossi has climbed, if not into the driver's seat, at least into the car where he can play backseat driver. The coalition cannot govern without him, and he is prepared to be very tough on the issues that are closest to his heart: federalism, federalism, and federalism. He also insists upon no concessions to the fascists. For over a week after the election no one knew if Bossi would even allow a government to be formed. Then, in one of the Lega's famous monster-rallies at Pontida, he told the crowd of perhaps 40,000 "people who work" that he would stay in the coalition for six months. If the government failed to deliver a federal constitution, he and his senators and deputies would walk out. Another party leader declared to the crowd: "I have just one name for you: Maroni," referring to the Lega's demand that Bossi's young advisor, Roberto Maroni, be given a cabinet position, preferably the interior ministry, a portfolio a good deal stronger than our own department of justice. Control of the interior ministry is an essential step in any march toward federalism.

Most political experts just shake their heads; however, this ignorant American is convinced that Umberto Bossi is the most able politician in Italy. The phrase "crazy like a fox" might have been invented to describe him. Outside the Lega it is rare to hear any appreciation of Bossi's political nose, but one intellectual who understands the point of Bossi's theatrics is my friend Giuditta Podestà, the sagacious and tough-minded director of the Centro Internazionale di Studi Lombardi, which is my base of operations for over a week.

The senator has to bear two things constantly in mind: first, the loyalty of his own supporters depends on his own fidelity to principle, and if he sells out on federalism, there is nothing left but anti-Southern resentment; second, the only cards he has to play as minor partner in a coalition are fanaticism and recklessness. If for one moment Berlusconi thought Bossi was a man who could be bullied or bribed, the bull mastiff would be turned into a lapdog. By the way, Berlusconi did pick Roberto Maroni as minister of interior. The *New York Times*, which spent decades justifying Yalta and other one-sided treaties with the Soviets, described Maroni's elevation as a compromise, but Maroni quickly moved to disabuse journalists of any notion that he is a moderate: his first act, after the announcement of his appointment, was to demand "a new constitution within eight months." Commenting on his statement, the *European*—the *USA Today* of Europe—now declares Maroni to be the "brains behind . . . Bossi." Last year it was Miglio. What no one will admit is that Bossi is his own man.

What to make of all this—a coalition that binds together the old nationalist right in the South with the regionalists and federalists of the North? The cement, which has the strength only of kindergarten paste, is fear of the left. On optimistic evenings after a good dinner of risotto and roast veal with good wine from the Valtellina, I can only cheer an electoral pact that combines (without fusing) the very best elements of modern politics: the Catholic right, liberal individualists, and regional autonomists. It is as if the Scots Nats were to team up with the best of the Thatcherites in a coalition with Enoch Powell—and even that comparison falls short of what has happened in Italy.

The next day, with the taste of the grappa I should not have asked for after dinner still on the tongue, I take a gloomier view. I remember what the political philosopher Pier Luigi Zam-

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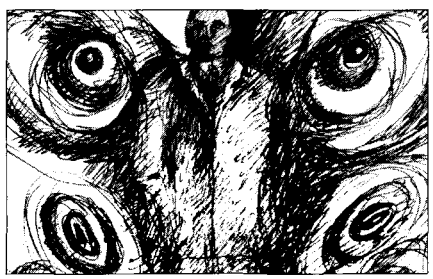
petti told me one night in Genova: no coalition can work if it includes Antonio Martino and Gianfranco Miglio, each of them as strong-willed as he is convinced that he holds a monopoly on truth. Besides, Zampetti explains, Italy's problems go deeper than mere corruption of the excesses of bureaucracy. It is a culture of *consumismo*, nourished by an Italian New Deal that was, to a great extent, foisted upon the country by American pressure, which, for many years, included direct subsidy of the Christian Democrats and their allies. The collapse of communism was the beginning of the end: for Italy, because it meant America no longer needed her as a bulwark against the Soviets, but ultimately for America. The United States in the postwar years was able to roll back some of the most pernicious aspects of the New Deal, but not for long: "What we Italians are going through today, you Americans will have to face tomorrow."

When I ask Zampetti if he has been invited to advise either the Lega or Forza Italia, he smiles and changes the subject. Later I hear rumors that Miglio "like the Turk will bear no brother near the throne." The truth of this, I cannot determine. Gianfranco Miglio deserves a great deal of praise, not least as a leading political theorist willing to take the risk and support the Lega. An authority on Karl Schmitt, and a long-time advisor to the Christian Democrats, Miglio is ending his long career as ideologue of the Lega. A superb polemicist, Miglio enjoys stirring up the hornets' nests before setting them on fire—a good sport that does not always succeed in eliminating the hornets.

Miglio's grand theory of federalism is centered on what he calls the macro-regions—three geographical/cultural areas into which all Italy is divided. There is a core of truth in this analysis that it would be difficult to deny. I spend an evening in Urbino with a group of classical scholars, one of whom—a Southerner—suggests that all those differences are in the past, but he is fighting a losing battle. "Why," he is asked, "does the Mafia control the South but not the North?" Exasperated silence.

Bruno Gentile, one of the great Hellenists working today, goes on to explain that it is Italy's regions and towns that created Italian civilization, not the mini-empire cobbled together by the House of Savoia. But, as he explains, the broad historical truth underlying the tripartite division of Italy is complicated.

The Lombards, for example, did not stay in Lombardia, and the ruling classes of central Italy have more than a little of their blood. In fact, Benevento, in the far south, was one of the great Lombard capitals. Italian poetry, which we often think of as Tuscan in origin, has its roots in the Sicilian poets who gathered at the court of Frederick II; within the three great regions, the differences between Torino and Veneto, Lazio and Toscana, can be more impressive than the similarities; finally, there is the obvious point that migration and intermarriage have done a great deal to break down regional differences. You can eat pizza in Milano, although, it is true, not very good pizza.



At the Lega's headquarters in Milano, a little professor of the type the rank and file might have derided a few years ago tells me that the new Italy is transcending history and culture. The class war that justified nation-states has ended, and all the economic subdivisions of Europe can join together in a new European union based on economic and geographical regions. Noting my skepticism, he asks if I don't agree. The class war will end, I tell him, when the earth falls into the sun. I put down my notebook and suffer through a textbook lecture on the real meaning of world federalism. For this I came all the way from Genova and took buses across most of Milano until I thought I must be in Switzerland.

Populist movements, when they begin to be successful, inevitably attract this kind of lumpen intelligentsia. But the real *leghisti* I run into in the following days are reassuring. I have dinner with my friend Elvio Conti, one of the original members, and a journalist from Como, who shows me her article "Elvio Conti: *apostolo della Lega*." There remains, in fact, the sense of a religious mission in the Lega, and their faith in Bossi as an incorruptible leader has no parallels in contemporary America. Whatever may be said of them by their enemies, these are simple, decent people, driven by neither bigotry nor greed. They want to control their own money, it is true, and many patriotic Italians find this a sign of disloyalty. I spoke with a political scientist who ridiculed the policy of one Lombard mayor who insisted upon all signs being written in Italian. What next, a Lombard-only rule? I also hear of policies restricting hospital admission to local residents, an exclusion that, if carried to an extreme, would be as unjust as it is inhumane. But there is nothing sinister in the desire to recreate a sense of small community and personal responsibility.

The "apostle of the Lega" explains: "Each of us has to work to buy and then to cook food for himself and his family. But what if we received a food allowance without having to work? This opens the door to every form of corruption and turns power, ultimately, over to the Mafia. The basis of federalism," he concludes, is responsibility. Conti, who never went to university, has a much better grasp of the theory than the intellectuals swarming toward the dominant party in Northern Italy.

Perhaps the real future of the Lega Nord lies in the hands of the men and women under 25 who make up 25 percent of the membership. *L'Europeo* quotes a young militant from Varese, who explains his allegiance to the Lega in striking terms: "I love Varese, I love my family and what my father has built on his own with his domestic utensils company. I like action, and federalism is a stimulus to action. I like regional differences. For this reason I am opposed to multiracial society; when I go to Sweden, I want to find Swedes, not Muslims."

In the empire of lies, an honest appreciation of human differences makes one a bigot, but neither Bossi nor his followers are bigots. They are people—or should I say a people—who have begun the long process of rediscovering the essentials of human life, and to do this, they shall have to forget all the pseudo-knowledge we have been accumulating, at least since the Enlightenment. What the Lega needs at this point is a philosophy and a religious faith that go deeper than mere politics, and the most obvious philosopher to turn to is not the skeptical liberal, Benedetto Croce, but another Napolitano, Thomas d'Aquino.

Thomas Fleming is the editor of Chronicles.

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Letter From Baltimore

by Ron Smith

Crime and Racial Politics

A recent series of articles in the *Baltimore Sun* painted a gloomy (yet persuasive) picture of "the decline of the Baltimore City Police Force." But then, why should police forces be expected to maintain high standards when all institutions are falling in what's left of America? The *Sun* stories basically explained how affirmative action lowers hiring standards, how the "ethnic cleansing" of whites in the power structure of what has become a dominantly black city results in lackluster management (though the paper didn't put it that way), and how the criminal injustice system in Mencken's hometown is just as corrupt and helpless as it is elsewhere across the land.

These facts come as no surprise to anyone who's been paying attention to the destruction of our culture, but they still amaze when laid out in the context of a newspaper investigation. The city has a new police commissioner, a cop named Tom Frazier, hired from the San Jose, California, department and quite the controversial choice because he is white. The mayor, Kurt Schmoke, who is black, calmly explained that he was looking for the best person to undertake the responsibilities of the position and that race shouldn't be a factor in the selection process. Well and good, one would think, but that wasn't the reaction of some prominent members of the "community." A delegation of ministers from black churches thought it appropriate to call on the mayor and express disappointment that racial solidarity wasn't maintained in picking a new Top Cop. Mr. Frazier replaces a black man, Edward Woods, famed equally for his political clout and for his unfortunate inability to express himself coherently. All hands seem to wish the new commissioner well, but if we are to believe the *Sun* series, he has his work cut out for him.

Meanwhile, the mayor, who became nationally known a few years ago for his argument that we might be better off legalizing drugs than continuing to fight a tragically expensive, losing war against their use, has been AWOL in the fight against violent street crime, fear of which is emptying the city of all who have means enough to flee. The mayor is forever saying that the crime problem in Baltimore is a matter of perception, as though if we could only clear our lenses we would see there really isn't much to worry about. One can understand Mr. Schmoke's reluctance to acknowledge the extent of blatant criminality in his city, because the people committing crimes are almost always black, and now that City Hall is controlled by black politicians it's much more difficult to cry that racism on the part of whites makes for selective law enforcement. Logically, that just doesn't wash any longer.

During a radio show that allows ordinary folks to voice their concerns to the mayor, a caller said that he had been driving into Baltimore with his family last Easter Sunday to visit the city's showcase, the Inner Harbor, when his car was caught up in a swarm of young blacks, some of whom he said exposed themselves, pounded on the car, and shouted threatening things. The man said that after extricating himself and his wife and children from the nightmarish scene, he made a vow never again to set foot in the city. The mayor's response was that it was a shame that this fellow had such a poor perception of Baltimore. The truly amazing thing, seems to me, would be if he did not.

When publicly discussing the problems of America's cities one must always take care to use euphemisms: for example, to say "urban problems" when meaning black and, in some cases, Hispanic crime. We haven't even begun to grapple with some of the harder facts about America's decay. There is no discussion in public forums of something most people acknowledge in private conversation: that violent street crime has an undeniable racial component. A friend of mine, a 25-year veteran of the Baltimore City Police Department, runs a shift out of a very high crime precinct, one teeming with the welfare underclass, both black and white. If rampaging violent crime is a result primarily of the welfare culture, how can one explain away his observation, based on long experience, that the criminals his officers deal with are nearly all black. He says they have no significant problem with crime among destitute whites. Put that in your sociological pipe and smoke it, Hillary.

A restaurant in Baltimore's Little Italy thought it a good idea to fight its customers' worries over criminal assault and robbery by hiring kids to work as valet parking attendants. At first they hired some white boys, but they themselves became favored targets of the muggers from the housing projects across the street, so now black kids park the cars, apparently with some immunity from their "gangsta" brothers.

As for me, I've joined the flight away from the city and its suburbs and now live in a small town 36 miles north of "Charm City," as boosters dubbed it a few years ago. Racially, I have a clean conscience, since several families in my new neighborhood are blacks, Buppies (Black Urban Professionals) who made their choice of residence, I assume, for the same reasons as everybody else, because they want to raise their kids and live their lives with a semblance of civility, something still possible in the hinterlands, wherein resides what little is left of the America we knew and loved.

Ron Smith is a Baltimore talk-show host, commentator, and writer.

LIBERAL ARTS

THE RELAXATION INDUSTRY

Members of the "oldest profession" are now attending personal development workshops in Utrecht, the Netherlands, reported the *European* last March. That's right, hookers are able to enroll in a course that covers health, crisis management, and job satisfaction. Says Henk Klein Beekman of the "relaxation industry" employers' union: "There are 35,000 women working in the Dutch relaxation industry, and many suffer from low self-esteem. We want to help them enjoy their work."

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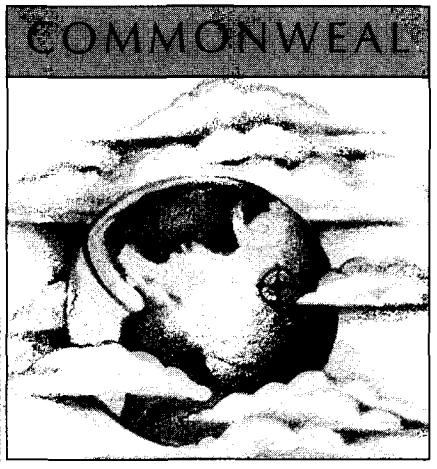

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

To Hicksville and Hebron

by Robert John

Mass Murderers From Brooklyn

On December 7, 1993, Colin Ferguson loaded his 9-millimeter pistol, put 160 rounds of additional ammunition in his pockets, and took a train crowded with homebound commuters to Hicksville, Long Island. There he deliberately commenced firing on the packed passengers, killing six people and wounding 17 others. As he paused to reload, two brave men overpowered him.

Early in the morning of February 25, 1994, Dr. Baruch Goldstein loaded his automatic rifle and went to a mosque in Hebron on the West Bank of the Jordan River, where the patriarch Abraham is said to be buried. Firing into the crowd kneeling at prayer, he emptied the magazine, killing 30 or more and wounding many others.

Ferguson, a Jamaican, deliberately set out to kill white people. Goldstein, a Jew who thought of himself as an Israeli, had gone to kill Palestinian Muslims. Why? Is the fact that each had spent a significant part of his life in Brooklyn all they had in common?

As a child, Ferguson led a sheltered life in an affluent family in Jamaica. He attended one of the island's best schools. Its principal said he was a pleasant, punctual, well-behaved student who played cricket, was the star goalkeeper on the soccer team, and graduated in the top third of his class. After graduation, his father got him a job but died when Ferguson was 20. Looking to improve his prospects, Ferguson emigrated to the United States when he was 24. After a marriage that gave him citizenship and a temporary companion, and problems with jobs and college, he moved to Brooklyn in 1991. A fall at one job gained him worker's compensation of $26,250 in September 1992.

By all accounts, Goldstein was a model student at the Yeshiva of Flatbush in Brooklyn, at Yeshiva University, and at Einstein Medical School. He is said to have been a paradigm of self-sacrifice and devotion to others. "It is hard to believe that such a person could become a mass murderer solely as a result of the pressure of recent events," noted liberal Rabbi Shlomo Sternberg in a March 1994 *New York Times* article.

We have become accustomed to the concept of the "power of positive thinking," thanks in part to the pioneering precept of the late Norman Vincent Peale. And the power of negative thinking? Well, the positive proponents warn against it, some saying it can set you up for cancer or shorten your life in some other way—through stress, depression, etc. In a major clinical study at Duke University, made public at a meeting of the Society of Behavioral Medicine on April 15, researchers reported that negative emotions, including hostility, significantly reduced chances of survival from the effects of heart disease.

Many people voice or write of their concern about the effect on the young of words and acts, of sounds and sights of violence on radio and TV. According to the National Coalition on Television Violence there are more than 700 studies and reports on TV violence. They are *overwhelming* in their conclusion that a *direct* and *major* causal connection to real-life violence exists. Dr. Hollenbach of the National Institute of Mental Health said that this may be the best proven fact in the whole field of psychology. Could this be the factor society is missing in trying to understand the aberrant behavior in Hicksville and Hebron?

What are the major messages about violence related by the media to people of African or Jewish descent? For the former, there is a constant stream of fiction and drama about oppression and discrimination suffered by "minorities." For Jews, the major impact must be from the repeated forms of presenting "the Holocaust." That these are powerful instruments producing emotional reactions in white people and in non-Jews is evident. There have been countless street demonstrations in major cities of Western Europe by Europeans protesting "racism" and by non-Jews protesting "anti-Semitism" when a synagogue or Jewish graveyard has been desecrated. In the United States, we have had riots and street demonstrations relating to the experiences of these two groups. If strong emotions of empathy and anger are evoked in both whites and non-Jews by the stimuli of these presentations of violence, how must "minorities" and Jews feel?

According to his landlord, Ferguson blamed racism for all his misfortunes and shattered expectations. Some Jews could only feel revulsion "when they heard some neighbors of the settler, Dr. Baruch Goldstein, gloat over what a gift he had handed them for the Jewish holiday of Purim," reported the *New York Times* last February. Goldstein, one may speculate, killed and died under the burden of the holocaust, of *Schindler's List* and of all that had gone before it.

More Jews are becoming aware of how psychologically damaging the repetition of the "holocaust" story is to their people. As the Rabbi Eli Hecht wrote last January in a *Los Angeles Times* article entitled "When Will Jews Let It Rest?":

> I am sick and tired of this generation identifying Judaism with suffering. Why is it imperative for

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> our children and young people to visit Holocaust museums? Why do they need to hear lectures about skinheads and neo-Nazis and growing anti-Semitism? Why should they see every film about the Holocaust, always portraying Jews as victims running for their lives?

Speaking of Israeli psychological resistance to moving forward in peace talks with the Palestinians, Communications Minister Shulamit Aloni told a radio interviewer on March 24, "We have got to get it into our heads once and for all that in our relations with the Palestinians we are not the victims. We are the rulers; we are the occupiers." There is an African-American tradition of pride in self-help rather than self-pity, of looking forward, from Booker T. Washington and Marcus Garvey to some leaders today.

What did Ferguson and Goldstein have in common? Forget Brooklyn! It was probably rage. Rage so great that they could not contain it. They felt compelled to take it out on others. The constant repetition of violence in audio-visual and written materials about Afro-American slavery and the holocaust, a Niagara of negativism, must have an effect upon the psyches of its recipients. It may be experienced as violation—as violence. It is a form of torture of the psyche, which may produce distortions of perception and judgment, a tendency to delusions of persecution or grandiosity, focused or generalized anxiety or fear or depression.

Could those who have written and produced so many dramas on the horrors of slavery and its aftermath have had a part in the mindset of Colin Ferguson as he set out for Hicksville on his mission of death? Were Stephen Spielberg's images from *Schindler's List* the last straw for Baruch Goldstein?

Many African-Americans and Israelis are sorely in need of liberation from their constant, toxic diet of mental violence, victimology, and negative thinking. We need to liberate ourselves from the pervasive psychological flagellation, oppression, violence, and negativism of slavery and the holocaust.

Robert John is a diplomatic historian, a policy analyst, and the author of The Palestine Diary *and* Behind the Balfour Declaration: The Hidden Origins of Today's Mideast Crisis.

White Liberals, Black Racists

by Hugh Murray

On March 3, 1994, ABC-TV's *Nightline* devoted its half hour to the question of deteriorating relations between blacks and Jews. As background, the program showed clips of newsreels from the civil rights era, the "halcyon days"—and years—of unity between Jews and blacks in the 1950's and early 60's. The narration then jumped to the 1980's and 90's with statements by Nation of Islam Minister Louis Farrakhan and by his spokesman Khallid Abdul Muhammad attacking Judaism as a "gutter religion" and Jews as "blood-suckers of the black community." Unfortunately, the guests, Cornel West of Princeton University and Leon Wieseltier of the *New Republic*, seriously distorted the history of black/Jewish relations.

True, blacks and Jews did work together in the civil rights movement, and the emblem of that unity was forged in blood during Freedom Summer 1964 when three activists were murdered near Philadelphia, Mississippi: Chaney, Goodman, and Schwerner—a black and two Jews. But even in the 1950's and 60's neither all Jews nor all blacks were sympathetic to the civil rights movement. For example, while a student at Tulane University in my native New Orleans, I was one of the first to join the local chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) in 1960. Quickly, nearly half our members were whites, mostly Southerners, and some were Jewish Southerners. But on the other side was fellow Tulanian Ken K., Jewish, who boasted that he had spied on civil rights organizations in Atlanta on behalf of the Ku Klux Klan! His rationale—so long as the Klan was fighting blacks, it would not have time for Jews. Also, when Alan Nathanson was arrested in an early CORE sit-in, some of his AEPi fraternity brothers sought to expel him from the Jewish fraternity. Ultimately, AEPi did not expel him, and more importantly, the only fraternity to which any of the white CORE members belonged was the Jewish AEPi.

It must be stressed that CORE and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) were deemed extremely radical at that time, and it was not only a Jewish organization that feared contamination by them. When the New Orleans CORE began a sit-in campaign in September 1960, the leaders of the New Orleans NAACP threatened to lift the charter of the NAACP Youth chapter if it did anything to support our sit-in. The NAACP Youths defied the adults and picketed on behalf of the CORE demonstrators, and the adult NAACP group relented.

Yet, far more vociferous in its opposition to the civil rights movement in the early 1960's was the Nation of Islam (NOI). Thus, the official newspaper of that organization, *Muhammad Speaks*, printed in 1962 an open and lengthy letter by Dolores Dunlap to "The Freedom Riders and Sit Ins," admiring their courage but deploring their tactics and urging them to forsake integration. She observed: "You have better opportunities to expand in the [segregated] south than in any other part of the country." *Muhammad Speaks* derided integrationists and mocked Martin Luther King, Jr. This is how the paper reported an April 1962 incident in Louisiana:

> Mixed Sit In Pair Jailed. Baton Rouge . . . Two young ringleaders of the integration movement came here recently allegedly to visit a man in prison—and ended up in jail themselves on charges of criminal anarchy.
>
> The two are Charles McDew, chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, a southern organization that agitates for mixing the races, and Robert Zellner, a staff member of the same organization. McDew is a so-called Negro, and Zellner is white and apparently the "brains."

That report might almost have been reprinted from a Klan paper.

The Nation of Islam philosophy was summarized in a heading that covered a third of the front page of *Muhammad Speaks* in January 1962, "Blood Mixing Death to Races." When in its very first issue in October 1961 it asked "Who Speaks for Negro?" the Black Muslim paper answered, "Certainly not Arthur Spingarn, white president of the NAACP, or Henry Steeger, white president of the Urban League; James Farmer, director of CORE, married to a white woman," or Harry Belafonte, George Schyuler, Adam Clayton Powell,

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Sammy Davis, Jr., Dorothy Dandridge, Diahann Carrol, Lorraine Hansberry, or Eartha Kitt, who were all married to whites. The paper warned: "A chief trick of Communists is dangling their white women in our direction. Do us a favor and keep your women in your beds and stay out of ours, and our neighborhoods and homes."

Clearly, the NOI opposed integration in the early 1960's. Thus *Muhammad Speaks* quoted Minister Malcolm X: "The anemic Negro leadership that is willing to settle for TOKEN integration instead of *complete separation* [emphasis mine], is only asking for continued slavery . . . and these Uncle Tom Negroes do not represent the true sentiments or feelings of the masses of our oppressed people." One of the Howard University students pictured in the paper as "spellbound" by Malcolm's oratory was an unidentified Stokely Carmichael, who in 1966 would announce the close of the civil rights era with his slogan "Black Power."

Even integrated socials in the north sparked Muslim scorn. A January 1962 cartoon depicted whites developing rockets and neutron bombs and Africans developing their newly independent nations, but in America, "The so-called Negro is also 'busy' developing the 'slop,' the 'roach,' the 'twist,' the 'horse,' and other such obscenities from which the white man reaps millions." While the cartoon shows integrated couples twisting in the background, the white man running the dance says, "Say, Mary, remind me to set some of this [money] aside for my Israel bonds." Anti-Semitism was not an uncommon feature of cartoons in *Muhammad Speaks*.

In August 1963, during the huge March on Washington for civil rights, Malcolm X was quite consistent when he denounced the "Farce on Washington." Muslims had meeting places in the South in the early 60's—Kingston, Lynchburg, Miami, Nashville, New Orleans, Orangeburg, Pine Bluff, Tampa, etc.—but unlike some black churches, the Muslim centers did not nurture and house the civil rights movement. Indeed, when Malcolm X traveled South at that time, it was not to protest segregation, but to negotiate with the Ku Klux Klan on how best to thwart the civil rights movement. None of this appeared in Spike Lee's film or in a recent PBS-TV documentary on Malcolm.

Some debate whether Minister Farrakhan described Adolf Hitler as simply "great" or as "wickedly great," but again, the debate occurs in a vacuum. On February 25, 1962, the Nation of Islam held its annual convention in Chicago's International Amphitheater, with 12,000 in attendance. The featured speaker, Elijah Muhammad, spoke on "The Future of the American So-Called Negroes." Prior to his address, differing views were presented by non-Muslims. Dr. Audrey M. Mackel stressed, "I believe in the American way and the NAACP," and he recounted various legal victories by that organization in the struggle for civil rights. Also addressing the 12,000 was Commander George Lincoln Rockwell of the American Nazi Party and Mr. Joseph Buharis of the White Circle League. Buharis complained that Rockwell should wear an armband with an American flag rather than a swastika. Otherwise, he generally agreed with Rockwell. Rockwell, wearing his swastika armband and Nazi uniform, spoke to the Muslim assembly. With such diverse preliminaries, how did the leader of the NOI react? Elijah Muhammad began, "Dr. Mackel, who just left the microphone, offers you slavery. . . . And if Dr. Mackel and his kind want us to bow and lick the boots of white people instead of going for ourselves, they are not fit even to be in the society of black men. The White Circle League is not a hypocrite. The German Nazi [he undoubtedly meant Rockwell, the American Nazi] [is] not [a] hypocrite. They are telling you and me that they stand for white people! I'm telling you that I stand for black people!" The newspaper printed some of the remarks by Dr. Mackel, a former member of the board of the NAACP, but here is how *Muhammad Speaks* introduced those remarks: "Dr. Mackel is another professional who seeks to destroy his people by intermixing although he makes his living from 99 percent so-called Negro patients." Elijah Muhammad's main attack was not against the Nazis, but against a representative of the NAACP.

One article in an early *Muhammad Speaks* was "Garvey Revisited," in which the black Muslims rightly paid homage to Marcus Garvey as a predecessor to and hero of the Nation of Islam. Before the establishment of the NOI, in the 1920's Garvey led the Universal Negro Improvement Association, which became America's largest black nationalist organization. The UNIA created Black Cross Nurses, the African Legion, and the Knights of the Nile and established the Black Star Steamship Line. Though black liberals and socialists like W.E.B. DuBois and A. Philip Randolph bitterly opposed him, Garvey found other associates—the leaders of the Ku Klux Klan. Garvey and the Kluxers met and shook hands in the 1920's. Eventually, Garvey was deported to Britain where he supported the Conservative Party and urged it to transfer some of Britain's African colonies to him. Garvey also admired some European leaders, like Mussolini. Indeed, Garvey reminded his followers, "We were the first fascists."

The problem, therefore, is not a single speech by Khallid Muhammad. Nor is the problem a single individual, be he Khallid Muhammad or Minister Farrakhan. The problem is the *idea*. Lurking behind much of black nationalism is the idea of fascism.

This explains much of the separatism, as well as the reaching out to the KKK and to the Nazis. It explains the anti-Semitism and anticommunism. It even explains why black nationalist professors now espouse black superiority. And while all of these ideas can be expressed crudely, they can also be asserted with considerable intellectual vigor, as in Harold Cruse's highly influential *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* (1967). The crisis, according to Cruse, was that Negroes had listened to and been duped by Jews, especially Jewish communists. Substitute "German people" and "Germans" for "Negro people" and "Negroes," and one might be reading Dr. Goebbels.

If black fascism is not new in America, then, one, why are so few Americans aware of the history of black fascism and, two, what is new about the role of black fascism today? First, there has been a conscious distortion of black history. The left, sometimes with the official sanction of government, has pretended that blacks cannot be racists. If blacks cannot be racists, they certainly cannot be fascists. So to support this ideological assertion, the history of black racist and black fascist movements must be ignored, revised, or refashioned and falsified.

Numerous universities throughout the nation currently support Black Studies departments. Why do they not discuss this history? What do they study? The staffs of those departments prefer to remain silent about links between black

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nationalism and fascism. Why? It is possible that some teachers in those departments are ignorant of that history. It is likely that others know but are afraid to expose that history to the public. They do not dare to criticize Malcolm or Elijah or Marcus. If they are black, they do not want to be labeled "Toms"; if they are white, they recognize that should they be called "racists," they might be fired. So both blacks and whites cover up any history that depicts blacks as racists. And finally, some members of such departments are themselves black nationalists, if not black racists; some peddle a black racism similar to that propounded by the Nation of Islam. That such ignorance, cowardice, cover-ups, and racism have gained such prominence at universities is, at core, the fault of the liberals who control academia.

If black fascism is not new, why does it appear to be more prominent and influential today? It *is* more prominent. In the early 1960's it was the civil rights movement that seemed to represent the hopes and dreams of most blacks (and many whites); the black anti-civil rights fringe was marginalized with Malcolm and the Muslims.

But is the Nation of Islam on the fringe today? One reason it has grown in importance is that black nationalists and black fascists are being subsidized by American liberals. When Khallid Muhammad spoke at a New Jersey college, he called Jews blood-suckers; gays, sissies; and the Pope, a cracker. He suggested that someone lift the Pope's "skirt" so we might find out what is beneath. A speech reeking with hatred was sponsored under the banner of . . . tolerance and multiculturalism! Khallid had made similar speeches at other colleges. What was different in New Jersey is that someone recorded his words. And though the special issue of *Time* did not mention it, *Der Spiegel* reported that Muhammad received an honorarium of $2,650 for that speech. When Khallid addressed students at Columbia University, he referred to it as Columbia Jewniversity in Jew York City. How much did Columbia University organizations pay for such enlightenment?

On February 24, 1994, the Nation of Islam's Minister of Health, Abdul Alim Muhammad, addressed an audience at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. In his speech Abdul Muhammad informed the audience that AIDS was part of a white conspiracy of genocide against blacks. While some protested outside the hall, others defended the appearance of the Black Muslim minister in the name of free speech. But it was not "free"; the university paid $3,000 for that lecture. Abdul Muhammad and Khallid Muhammad and other Muslim speakers have been rewarded with thousands of dollars to promote their nationalist and fascist doctrines. Madison's *Wisconsin State Journal* courageously published a perceptive cartoon depicting Minister Farrakhan, Abdul Muhammad as his Minister of Health, and a dopey University of Wisconsin student as his Minister of Finance.

A month later the student center at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee became a storm center over Khallid Muhammad's scheduled appearance on March 23. Opposition to his views apparently prompted the university to cancel his use of an auditorium. Leaders of the campus Black Students Union and the university administration jockeyed in the dispute, which formally focused on the NOI's requirement that all attending be frisked and that no armed university guards be permitted in the auditorium. The university canceled the contract, but the BSU demanded free speech and threatened suit, and the university "compromised." Khallid would be allowed to use the auditorium, but university guards could be present, and metal detectors would be used rather than frisking. However, the squabble provided both the BSU and the NOI with much local publicity.

In February, Jan Weller, liberal talk-show host on Wisconsin Public Radio, had announced that he might invite anyone to be a guest on his program except an overt racist. A week before Khallid's lecture, Weller invited BSU president Bernell Ross to be a guest. Liberal Weller raised only faint objections as Ross defended Khallid, whose lecture at UWM was sponsored by Ross's BSU. Ross added that he thoroughly agreed with Khallid's belief that, in South Africa, every white should be killed, including children, babies, and the disabled. But Weller did not call Ross a racist! How comforting to know that this is not racism.

A week later on another station, talk-show host Charles Sykes also had Bernell Ross as a guest. Ross reiterated many black nationalist positions, including the importance of patronizing black businesses, black stores, black professionals. I mused that at least Khallid Muhammad had been consistent; he had attended Dillard University, a historically black college in New Orleans. Why was Ross at UW-Milwaukee, which he himself had characterized and denounced as culturally white? The reason seems clear. Ross and his fellow BSU members get a better deal from "white" colleges. Because of affirmative action, "white" colleges often admit blacks where they would reject similarly unqualified whites; white colleges provide special scholarships for blacks only (they provide none for whites only) and pamper blacks with special tutoring programs, even recognizing a BSU but denying recognition to a White Students Union.

Khallid Muhammad did speak at UWM. Across the street, a free, multicultural rally for tolerance at a synagogue drew 1,000. Inside the student union building some 100 protestors, organized by Zionist leader Rabbi Avi Weiss, shouted against racism and anti-Semitism to those lining up for Khallid. The protestors' placards wrongly equated Muhammad and David Duke, for whatever Duke's personal beliefs, in his recent campaigns he has run on the platform of the 1960's civil rights movement—a color-blind government and an abolition of racial preferences and set-asides and double standards.

Muhammad's appearance was a success. The auditorium overflowed, and hundreds had to be seated in other rooms to view him on closed circuit. Over 1,600 persons paid to hear Khallid's message. He was introduced by former Milwaukee Alderman Michael McGee, who, during the Persian Gulf War, had sent a letter of solidarity to Iraq's Saddam Hussein. Khallid gave his audience what they wanted to hear, opening with "I didn't come here to pin the tail on the donkey. I came to pin the tail on the honkey." Echoing Elijah Muhammad decades before, he asserted he was not present to teach hatred of whites, but "to teach blacks to love your black selves." A week later, the president of the Milwaukee Jewish Council complained that the *Milwaukee Sentinel*'s report of the event had "painted a false portrait of a 'kinder, gentler' Muhammad" and added: "Can one imagine the justifiable outcry that would greet a white supremacist speaker who announced he intended to 'pin the tail' on African-Americans (referring to them with a similarly disparaging term)?" Khallid

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Muhammad displayed his kinder, gentler side to reporters of the city's black newspaper: "When he issued his diatribes against Jews, Dr. Khallid said he was hurt and angry because Jewish protestors were attempting to stop Black students from entering the auditorium, and even more inciteful, were chanting 'Kill Farrakhan.'" Khallid added: "They should consider themselves lucky they just got words from me. They're lucky we didn't leave the auditorium and bum rush them."

In April, Khallid Muhammad raised his rhetoric in a speech at Howard University. Sponsored by Unity Nation, which is headed by a Howard law student, the program included an address by CCNY's black nationalist Professor Leonard Jeffries. Featured speaker Khallid Muhammad roused a number of gasps from his otherwise sympathetic audience when he declared that he "loved" Colin Ferguson, the black racist murderer who had shot and killed many whites and an Asian on a New York commuter train last December. According to Khallid, "God spoke to Colin Ferguson and said, 'Catch the train, Colin, catch the train.'" Presumably, God also told Ferguson, "Shoot the whites! Shoot the Asians!" Of course, many in the Howard University audience applauded Khallid's praise of Ferguson (as many applauded when Minister Farrakhan merely mentioned Ferguson's name at a massive Nation of Islam rally last December).

While Howard University students were given the opportunity to hear Khallid twice in early 1994, the university denied them the chance to hear one of the foremost scholars on the subject of slavery, Yale professor David Brion Davis, who is a convert to Judaism. As Mary Cage reported in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* in May, "Howard officials had decided to cancel the talk because they said the atmosphere was 'volatile.'" Rather than control or expel the disruptive elements that made the campus volatile, the Howard leadership simply canceled Davis's lecture. It was announced soon thereafter that Howard's president would become president of the University of Texas in Dallas.

In May, Khallid Muhammad spoke before yet another university audience, this time in Riverside, California, after which a man described as a former NOI minister attempted to assassinate him. The crowd then turned on the black would-be assassin, the Reverend James Bess, and would have lynched him had police not intervened with drawn weapons. Clearly, universities are no longer ivory towers of reason. They are battlegrounds where scholars are silenced while preachers of hate duel for students' allegiance, both literally and figuratively.

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Defining Racism

by Daniel R. Vining, Jr.

"Racism" and its derivative, "racist," are oft-used words, and so we ought to know what they mean. But often we don't, and we just fling them at each other, hoping they will wound, if not kill, the offensive person.

One of my dictionaries (*Standard College Dictionary*, 1963) defines racism this way: "1. An excessive or irrational belief in or advocacy of the superiority of a given group, people, or nation, usually one's own, on the basis of racial differences having no scientific validity. 2. Social action or government policy based upon such assumed differences." Another (*Webster's College Dictionary*, 1991) defines it this way: "1. A belief or doctrine that inherent differences among the various human races determine cultural or individual achievement, usually involving the idea that one's own race is superior. 2. A policy, system of government, etc., based on such a doctrine. 3. Hatred or intolerance of another race or other races." Look how the definition of racism has changed between 1963 and 1991. Gone from the 1991 definition is any notion of rationality or scientific validity, which are virtually the same thing.

By the 1991 definition (please note carefully its use of the word *usually*; it doesn't say *always*), if I note in speech or writing that sickle-cell anemia is likely to emerge in the black population but is virtually absent from the white population, then I will be guilty of racism; if I observe that about 80 percent of the NBA's players are black, then I am a racist; similarly, if I remark that none of the finalists in the Olympic 100-meter dash are ever East Asians, or that out of the top hundred 100-meter runners in the United States only one (or is it two or none?) is white, that the vast majority of the running backs and wide receivers in the NFL are black, that whites dominate the throwing events in track and field, etc., then I am a racist. If I say that almost all serial killers, mass murderers, and political assassins (e.g., Bundy, Darhman, Oswald, Son of Sam) are white, then I am also a racist. The guy who told me when I was an undergraduate that all the professors in the mathematics department were either Jewish or Japanese was a racist. And when Martin Peretz wrote in the *New Republic*, as he did on February 10, 1992, "that the number of American Ph.D.'s in mathematics . . . fell from 619 in 1978 to 341 ten years later . . . [and] of these only one was black," he was a racist.

Note that all of the above are based on observation and hard numbers, that they are therefore "scientific" by any definition of the term, that they do not imply the superiority or inferiority of any race, but that they would still be labeled racist by the 1991 definition of racism given above. So, in effect, our usage (as revealed in the definition in *Webster's College Dictionary*, which reflects current usage pretty well) of the word "racism" is directly opposed to the mission of the university, which is to make scientific statements about any phenomenon under the sun (and even beyond). So what do we do?

In the early 1980's, historian William McNeil wrote as follows:

> Polyethnic lamination—clustering different groups in particular occupations and arranging them in a more or less formal hierarchy of dignity and wealth—is again asserting itself in the Soviet Union as much as in France, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States.
>
> This constitutes a reversion to the civilized pattern of the deeper past when the world's great empires comprised a small ruling group—itself often recruited from a multiplicity of ethnic backgrounds—presiding over a hierarchy of specialized occupations, each of which tended to be dominated by a particular ethnic group. Such social arrangements do not accord well with liberal theory. When such differences do in fact exist, theory gets into difficulty.
>
> Surely, the gap between theory

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and practice is growing among us with respect to migration and the status of ethnically diverse immigrants. It is high time we thought about it carefully.

McNeil's obvious argument is that very little careful thought has been given to the racial and ethnic question in the West, but most particularly to the fact that all the races and ethnic groups of the world are well represented in the United States—uniquely so among the major countries of the world, as far as I know. Our current usage of the words "racism" and "racist" is clearly taking us away from this objective.

When Bush nominated Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court to replace Thurgood Marshall, he said that Thomas was the best legal mind in the country, or something to that effect, which we knew to be untrue. And, more recently, Clinton spoke at least in an obfuscating way when he appointed various women and minorities to his Cabinet. Why do our leaders mislead us? Why can't they say, with McNeil, that a small ruling group should be recruited from the different nationalities and groups that comprise this country? This country is multiracial, and eventually we'll have to accept McNeil's words.

Now turn to the legal aspects of race and racism: hate speech, speech codes on college campuses, crimes of various sorts that are racially motivated, etc. The legal situation with respect to freedom of speech can be fairly summarized as follows. Although the Western-type democracies share basic values, they differ in the order of importance attributed to these values. Each society determines the position of freedom of expression according to its own history, institutions, sense of security, and tolerance of dissent. Although in the United States the reach of freedom of expression has not been static, the contemporary Supreme Court speaks of this freedom in almost absolute terms and attributes to it a commanding priority over other competing liberties.

The First Amendment, with which all laws in the country have to be consistent, is straightforward and simple: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion; *or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press;* or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances" (italics mine).

Given the current state of First Amendment law, it is unlikely that the United States Senate will ratify the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (adopted in 1963 by the General Assembly of the U.N.). Although the United States signed the convention, it did so with the following caveat:

> The Constitution of the United States contains provisions for the protection of individual rights, such as the right of free speech, and nothing in the Convention shall be deemed to require or to authorize legislation or other action by the United States of America incompatible with the provisions of the Constitution of the United States of America.

Congress never ratified the convention because of Article Four. This article would require the United States to declare "all dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred" an offense punishable by law.

On the other hand, Great Britain did ratify it. In 1965, Parliament (whose acts are the law of the land—the United Kingdom has no written constitution, though the Parliament there does try to pass laws within certain unwritten constraints, e.g., it tries to preserve freedom of speech) passed section six of the Race Relations Act, 1965 (RRA 1965). Under this section, a person is guilty of incitement to racial hatred if

> with intent to stir up hatred against any section of the public in Great Britain distinguished by colour, race, or ethnic or national origins: (a) he publishes or distributes written matter which is threatening, abusive or insulting; or (b) he uses in any public place or at any public meeting words which are threatening, abusive or insulting, being matter or words likely to stir up hatred against that section on grounds of colour, race, or ethnic or national origin.

This section is notable in several respects: first, it reverts back to the seditious libel standard (in fact, the First Amendment of the United States Constitution was created in direct response to the British sedition laws that make criticism of the government illegal) in that it requires the speaker to have "intent" to stir up hatred; second, it punishes only the cruder forms of speech; third, it targets only public racist commentary; and, finally, the use of the law to combat racist speech requires the consent of the Attorney General (the law requires that no prosecution be brought without the consent of Britain's Attorney General). The intent requirement made it very difficult for the Crown to win convictions under the RRA 1965. For example, it proved impossible to convict the publishers of a newspaper who declared as their goal the "return of people of other races from this 'overcrowded island' to 'their own countries.'" The defendants argued that their newspaper had educational value as a means of addressing important social issues, and the prosecutors were unable to prove that the defendants intended to instill in the populace any hatred of immigrants. So, in an effort to make prosecutions for incitement easier, section 70 of the Race Relations Act, 1976 (RRA 1976), discarded the intent requirement. Convictions could henceforth be based upon the mere proof that the speech or publication of "threatening, abusive or insulting" words was likely to stir up hatred against "any racial group in Great Britain." Even with the relaxation of the government's burden, there were few prosecutions considering the rise in racial strife and violence during the period 1976-1981. In a further effort to strengthen the incitement laws, Parliament passed Part III of the Public Order Act, 1986 (POA 1986). Under Section 18, the "use of threatening, abusive, or insulting words" is an offense if: a) the speaker intends thereby to stir up racial hatred, or b) having regard to all the circumstances racial hatred is likely to be stirred up. Now a person can be punished for either *intending* to stir up racial hatred or for using words *likely* to stir up hatred. John Tyndall, the editor of *Spearhead*, which is published by the far-right British National Party, was convicted under this act and served six months in prison.

There is nothing like the First Amendment of the United States Constitution in any other country; in those European countries having formal, written constitutions—e.g., Germany, Italy, and France—there is no equivalent clause. Therefore, in other Western democracies, certain kinds of speech are illegal. In Israel, a kind of Western, democratic insertion into the Middle East, the far-

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right Kach party, founded by the late Rabbi Meir Kahane and espousing the removal of all non-Jews from Israel, has been outlawed. In Germany, likewise, certain far-right parties have been outlawed. In addition, certain insignia, like the swastika, and gestures of the National Socialist (Nazi) party are illegal. *Mein Kampf* cannot be bought, sold, or owned. Holocaust-denial is also illegal. In France, a person can go to jail and face fines for denying the holocaust or certain aspects of it, like the use of gas chambers. In Canada, certain types of speech involving the holocaust are also outlawed.

This is not the case in the United States. Unless the speech incites imminent violence, it is protected by the First Amendment. Thus, we have the American Nazi Party. The swastika is freely shown. *Mein Kampf* is openly available, and you won't get arrested for selling it or for buying and reading it. Holocaust-denial, in its many forms—some involving the gas chambers, others involving the number of deaths of Jews in Europe between 1933 and 1945—is not an indictable offense. In fact, the United States has become a major source of hate material for Europe and Canada.

What kinds of speech and press are proscribed in America? Speech that incites imminent violence, pornography that involves minors, harassing speech in the workplace, and "fighting" words (like yelling "nigger" at a black or "kike" at a Jew). That's it in the United States. For this reason, speech codes at universities have proved impossible to maintain. Speech codes at the large public universities, like the University of Michigan and the University of Wisconsin, that ban certain kinds of racially offensive speech have been found unconstitutional. As a consequence, these speech codes have been thrown out, and private universities, like the University of Pennsylvania, have followed suit. For this reason also, it has proved impossible to regulate the speech of Professor Jeffries, Louis Farrakhan, and his aide Khallid Muhammad, as well as countless white supremacists, though their speech contains many willful errors and deliberate distortions regarding race and ethnicity and definitely incites racial and ethnic hatred.

But our usage of the word "racist" is definitely on a different course from the attitude reflected in law, and one wonders how long this will last. The legal situation in Europe and Canada regarding speech inciting racial hatred is clearly a warning shot across our bow.

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A Good Soldier

by Harold McCurdy

At Duke, before the blacks came, there were Jews
To keep the tensions up we'll never lose
While stereotypes that mark off herd from herd
Obscure the singularities conferred
On every uncloned individual soul.
In that environment a smouldering coal
Of racist feeling scorched the scholarly air
Between a Boston Jew and Mellon heir
Proud of his Aryan blood. The feud was waged
With pinpricks, micro-insults, whispers gauged
To irritate: kosher Bostonian tone,
Loudness of an expensive herringbone,
Olive complexion, arrogant Aryan eye,
Nothing that could be called a filthy lie.
In time, the herringbone marched off to die
Against the Hitler panzers, but too late
To stem the tide of anti-Semitic hate
(And anti-Christian) that made Rudolf Hoess
The Commandant of Auschwitz. Whom hear confess:

"I was a lonely boy, companioned by
Water and trees and animals, and shy
With my devoted parents. Father meant
Me for the priesthood, but my destiny sent
My guttering faith into the Kaiser's war
And I emerged apostate, unfit for
That occupation. While I still could pray
I witnessed Baltic slaughter. To this day
Those half-burned huts beside the Dvina, crammed
With charred child-bodies, prove mankind is damned.

"Imprisoned six years for a traitor's death,
I suffered among criminals, out of breath
Now for all prayer, but strenuous to survive
And farm good German soil, and cleanly wive,
And have fine healthy children. And I did.
My rural dream fared well, till Himmler bid
Me back to a soldier's life and to Dachau,
A nightmare unforeseen. I remember how
I went all hot and cold when first I saw
Two prisoners flogged. But I believed in law,
In law and order, and the soldier's code.
Dachau. Then Sachsenhausen. Then my road
Brought me to Auschwitz, where, above the gate,
Arbeit macht frei spurred enemies of the State
To do their duty, as I did myself,
Zealously, even when pity cut me in half
Peering into a gas-chamber, or turning
My eyes away from children chosen for burning.

"Let the great public continue to regard
Me as a beast, the cruel, heartless, hard,
Sadistic murderer of two million Jews.
That's my indelible image in the news.
How can I contradict it? I, in fact,
Was a good soldier, disciplined to act
As one cog in the complicated machine
Of the Third Reich. Now that the great machine
Is broken, this one cog, as the cog knew,
Must be destroyed. Neither Gentile nor Jew
Hereafter will comprehend, or ever can,
That Hoess too had a heart and was a man."

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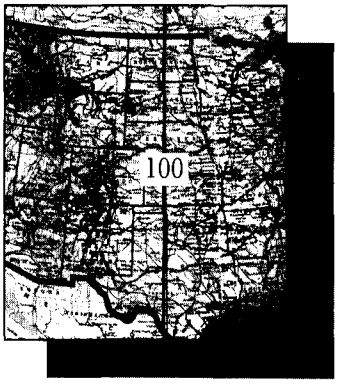
by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Give Me Wilderness, Or Give Me . . .



Better than anyone before or since, Frederick Jackson Turner explained the peculiarly American fascination with wilderness that continues to perplex and, occasionally, to annoy European observers. In his instantly famous paper delivered before the American Historical Association's annual meeting 101 years ago, Professor Turner declared, "American social development has been continually beginning over and over again on the frontier. This perennial rebirth, this fluidity of American life, this expansion westward with its new opportunities, its continuous touch with the simplicity of primitive society, furnish the forces dominating American character. The true point of view in the history of this nation is not the Atlantic coast, it is the great West."

Americans whose ancestry is long established in this country have an instinct for wilderness—wilderness as opposed merely to "nature"—received naturally from their forebears and nurtured by a genuinely American cultural memory that cosmopolitan immigrants arriving immediately before and in the aftermath of World War II, as well as the homegrown multiculturalists and globalists of more recent date, have not succeeded entirely in extirpating from the United States. This is the instinct to which the popular purveyors of the myth of the Wild West appealed in print and on film, with spectacular success; and on which, since the 1970's, the advocates of preservationism have substantially relied. The only changes, in fact, that the fabricators of the mythology of the New West have made in respect to that of the Old is the removal of the entire cultural component and the inflation of the natural one so as to create a vision of nature undefiled by the presence of a humanity yet to be born—or else rendered extinct millennia ago. By the criteria of the Sierra Club, the canyons of the American Southwest *circa* A.D. 1000 were not a *bona fide* wilderness area, being inhabited by the Anasazi who lived in cliff villages, grew corn in the creek bottoms, and enjoyed the use of artifacts provided by their most advanced technology.

A proponent of wilderness and even more wilderness, I am reminded each time I enter the Bridger-Teton Wilderness in the Wind River Mountains a hundred miles or so from home that my understanding of the term differs from that of the Social Democratic Wilderness Party (SDWP). This business of horses, for instance. Partly because I am a lifelong horse fancier, but also because to be astride a good horse in the Rocky Mountains is one of life's great experiences, I am unapologetically reliant upon horses in wilderness country, whether *de facto* or officially designated. This means that my animals and I are a serious offense to the majority of the lycra-bottomed backpackers we encounter along the trail. For the few who are willing to listen, I argue that the use of horses by the Sioux and Mandan tribes did not make the Dakotas less of a wilderness than they were before the Indians acquired their mounts from the Europeans; when pressed, I have maliciously suggested that the West was not explored and won by yuppies and college kids outfitted from Patagonia and REI catalogues.

Later after such encounters, smoking a pipe and drinking whiskey beside a fire of krummholz pine while my two Arabians, white and black, graze on picket lines across an alpine meadow as the flames deepen from yellow to orange to red and the surrounding spires of pink granite fade through shades of lavender to blue and finally to a flat black against a sky made silver by the full moon, I have contemplated the meaning of "wilderness." For me, anyplace where I can travel horseback 20 or 30 miles a day for days on end without meeting more people than I could count on my two hands; where no human constructions or fenced lands exist; where the trails are often no more than granitic troughs or a line of exposed boulders on which a panicky horse can mean severe injury hundreds of miles from a well-equipped hospital; and where, if you are seriously injured or die, you are very likely never to be found at all qualifies as wilderness. For others, however—usually people living 50 of the 52 weeks a year in Scarsdale, Denver, Philadelphia, or San Francisco—"wilderness" is a "pristine" area from which every kind of power tool is banned and horses and hunting prohibited. (If I ever have the bad luck to lose a horse in wilderness country, my job, according to the Forest Service's regulations, will be to quarter it with a hunting knife and handsaw, bury the carcass in a trench dug with a portable latrine shovel or the lid of an empty tuna-fish can, and pack out the saddle and bags on my back.) For these people, so it seems to me, "wilderness" is essentially a fantasy allowing them to pretend for a demarcated period of time that not only the modern world but the world since the creation of man does not exist, while ignoring the obvious if unpleasant truth that in the circumstances of the present era it is the tract of land, however extensive, protected by arbitrary code that is artificial; not what lies beyond it.

(Once, having ridden past a line of backpackers beside the trail, I heard a man remark loudly that horses are a "lazy-ass way" of going into the mountains. If only it were so. People with little or no experience of horses often regard them as self-guiding, hay-burning Cadillacs of flesh and blood upon which the rider passively and effortlessly sits. In fact, they are highly nervous, often irrational, and potentially dangerous animals weighing half a ton or more and requiring the keenest concentration, much forethought, and careful anticipation based on a familiarity with equine psychology to avoid disaster. If you don't want to ride a horse, fine. But don't call yourself an outdoorsman if you *can't* ride one.)

The University of Arizona published a

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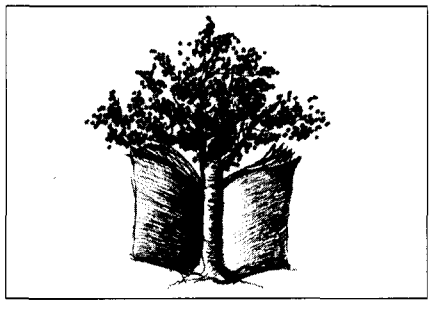
book last spring called *Open Spaces, City Places*, a collection of essays developed from papers delivered at a literary conference in Tucson. Judy Nolte Temple, the volume's editor, refers in her introduction to the paradox that Southwestern "writers love open spaces, caressing them with words, yet seek the intellectual and cultural stimulus of the city. Only in today's Southwest do so many write that which they do not live."

Well, not just in the Southwest. I was recently taken by friends in Salt Lake City to hear Terry Tempest Williams read from her latest book. If you don't live in the Rocky Mountain region you probably haven't heard of Terry Tempest Williams—but you will. She has acquired a New York publisher, and the night I heard her she had just returned from giving a reading in New York City. Having looked through her first book, *Pieces of White Shell*—a meditation on Navajo legend and ritual—five years ago when I was traveling on the reservation, I had wondered since what the fuss was about. It is perfectly clear to me now. As a writer (though not as a performer) Terry Tempest Williams is strictly amateur night, but she still sells a lot of books. Indeed, I suspect that is *why* she sells books—mostly to women who could write as well as Terry Tempest Williams does, and many of whom probably do. The audience was overwhelmingly female, and the females were overwhelmingly urban women who looked as if they wouldn't know how to take a pee behind a rock or pour scorpions out of a boot. But they loved Terry Tempest Williams, who was so overcome with emotion at returning from Gotham-and-Gommorah to "her people" in Utah that she suffered a breakdown of tears at the start of her reading.

Terry Tempestuous Williams is a self-described "eco-feminist" (it is not clear how she reconciles her role with Mormonism) for whom activism on behalf of the environment is conceptually and practically linked with the war against patriarchy. A couple of martinis beforehand dulled my critical intellect but failed to block two literary impressions: one, that free verse was invented solely for the purpose of allowing nonpoets to write poetry and, two, that you should never, ever trust your wife alone with a bear, bears having replaced men as objects of womanly desire and proved themselves willing to accept the challenge. (I felt sorry for the bears, but reflected that here was a subject for a novel by Kingsley Amis.) Still the *pièce de résistance*, I thought, was a poem (free verse) about the death of "Jesus coyote" on a rancher's barbed-wired fence post, offered as an acceptable sacrifice to redeem the anthropogenic ruin of the natural world. At the conclusion of the reading there were audible snuffles; the emcee cried, "Oh, Terry, you're such a treasure!"; and the Treasure signed 300 copies of the New Book with a Personal Message for everybody.



Such is the audience, I'm afraid, for contemporary Western writing. But little as most of these people seem to know about literature, they know even less about the West—the real West: the small-town, rural, working West. The Southwestern literary establishment does not live in the desert for the same reason that Christians do not live in churches: leaving the perpetual adoration of their God to cloistered monks and nuns, they get on with the business of everyday life in a secular environment. The wilderness crowd—environmentalist writers and activists; green *salonistes* and courtesans—has succumbed to the angelist approach to nature as opposed to the bestialist one adopted by developers, industrialists, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Where their enemies can think only to slash, burn, bulldoze, excavate, and pave over, they can only idolize. For them, hands honestly blackened by the soil are bloody hands.

But we know, having had Pascal quoted to us all our lives, that man is neither an angel nor a beast, but something else. "By every conceivable measure," Edward O. Wilson has written, "humanity is ecologically abnormal." Does the fact not suggest that human nature is supernatural, transcending the natural world? If the ecocatastrophe predicted by the doomsayers actually arrives, it will come as a lesson to mankind that human intelligence and creativity are gifts inevitably transposed into curses when they are not informed by supernatural wisdom and charity. This lesson in humility, like most instruction of its kind, is not something imposed on us from above: rather it develops concomitantly with our pride and as a result of our works, to stand with them at the end to judge us. In the post-Christian world it is immeasurably hard to discern the third way between bestialism and angelism, and between the natural world as an object of consumerist greed and a vast, inviolate temple-museum.

While Turner's frontier receives nothing but scorn and obloquy these days, what he called "the first period of American history" stands as a better guide than "wilderness" for the environmentalist agenda, since for all its rapacity it seems to have offered the best synthesis we have yet known between natural and human values—perhaps the best even of which we are capable. For one thing there were still, comparatively speaking, very few of us, whites and Indians alike. For another, the American frontier was the closest Americans have come to creating a civilization that combined cultivated intellect with material simplicity—a paradigm for the coming "age of limits." "The wilderness," Turner wrote,

> masters the colonist. It finds him a European in dress, industries, tools, modes of travel, and thought. It takes him from the railroad car and puts him in the birch canoe. It strips off the garment of civilization and arrays him in the hunting shirt and moccasin. It puts him in the log cabin of the Cherokee and Iroquois and runs an Indian palisade around him. Before long he has gone to planting Indian corn and plowing with a sharp stick; he shouts the war cry and takes the scalp in orthodox Indian fashion. In short, at the frontier the environment is at first too strong for the man. He must accept the conditions which it furnishes, or perish, and so he fits himself into the Indian clearings and follows the Indian trails. Little by little he transforms the wilderness, but the outcome is not the old Europe. . . . here is a new product that is American.

Could that be why Americans cannot forget the frontier, but continue to look back toward it with awe and longing?

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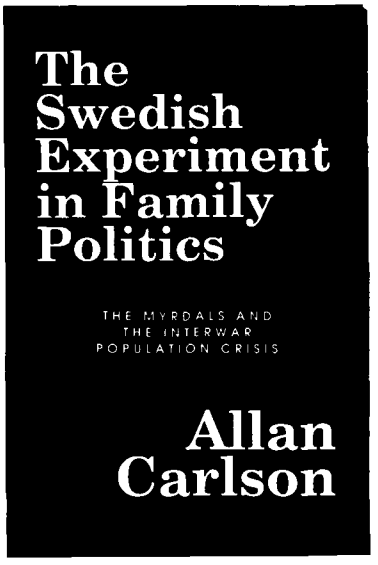

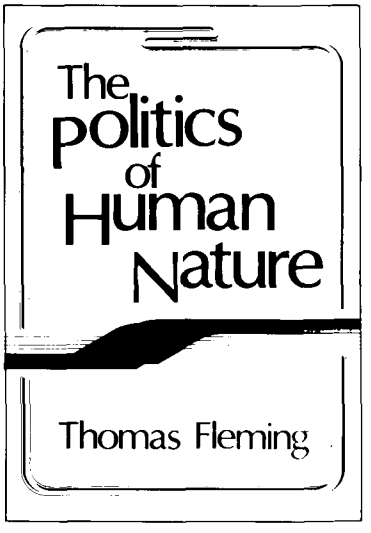

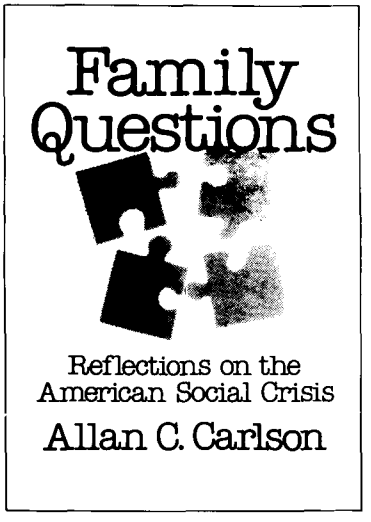

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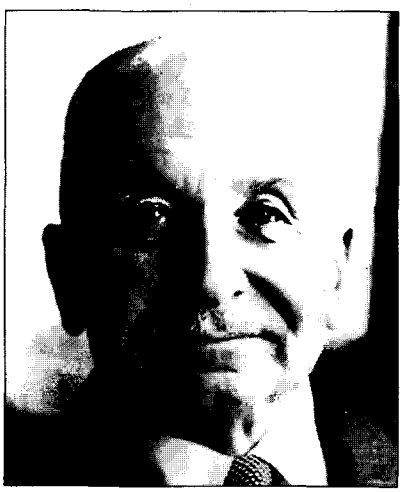

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